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ENGLAND AFTER THE WAR

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LLOYD GEORGE: THE MAN AND HIS STORY

NEW AMERICA

ADVENTURES OF A NEWSPAPER MAN

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ENGLAND
AFTER THE WAR

BY

FRANK DILNOT

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FOREWORD

ENGLAND, a wounded giant, is struggling to recover strength. Other countries in the intervals of their own embarrassments and strivings are watching with an interested, if not an anxious, eye to discover if in a new vitality the giant is to choose a new way of life. There are certainly some signs of it. Guided by a spirit which is essentially stable England may well try novel methods for meeting unexampled conditions. Experiments of deep consequence to this country will have a significance and influence beyond our borders. England automatically emerges as a leader in after-war conditions for the world and the path the country treads may lead to hope and encouragement, may conceivably bring in sight a beacon of warning to the observing nations outside.

In the following pages there are sketched some of the main features of England in a state of transformation. That it is a complete picture is not suggested. In the shifting scenes of the moment one can do no more than secure a snapshot. It would require a committee of experts widely varied and all highly endowed to collate the facts about this country at present, and it is a safe guess that the better fitted they were for their extensive task the more sharply would they be divided in their conclusions as to tendencies for the

future. An individual judgment has, at any rate, the advantage of cohesion.

In what I have written I have used the word "England" to denote the country as a whole except in cases where I have referred specifically to Scotland, Ireland or Wales. "The United Kingdom" or "Britain" would be more strictly accurate, but "England" is in common use to express the nation in general. Distinctions abroad are sometimes made but they do not trouble any of us, except perhaps the Irish. Five of the principal members of the "English" Cabinet are Scotsmen, and the Prime Minister who presides over it is a Welshman.

F. D.

London,
March, 1920.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	A Country in Transition	3
II	The Mood of the People	15
III	In the Melting Pot	28
IV	The Governance of England	39
V	The Social Texture	55
VI	The Women	69
VII	The Country's Money	83
VIII	Business the Keystone	96
IX	The Invasion by Labour	108
X	Labour Battling for Enthronement	124
XI	Ireland	135
XII	England and America	157
XIII	England and the other Nations	176
XIV	Britain Overseas	192
XV	The Present British Chieftain	206
XVI	The Old Gang	220
XVII	The New Men	240
XVIII	From Lord Northcliffe to Bernard Shaw	258
XIX	Drink, Bureaucracy, Religion, and the Honours List	273
XX	The Safeguards of Sport and a Sense of Humour	283
XXI	Where England Leads	301
XXII	New Programmes of Life	313

ENGLAND AFTER THE WAR

England After the War

CHAPTER I

A COUNTRY IN TRANSITION

AS a sequel to war England is at the parting of the ways in regard to the manner of her life, and, only half conscious of the fact, is turning with some stumbles, but sure instinct, to a reorganization of society. Four years of permeating tragedy have taken a certain settled order from the nation, and tides of feeling hitherto unknown sweep the land. Material changes travel in company with novel moods among large sections of English men and women.

The machinery of government goes on, railways run as usual, Parliament sits with its accustomed rites, postmen deliver letters as they did before the war, crowds still line up for seats in the theatres, clergymen preach their usual sermons on Sunday, and city streets and countryside show little difference to the casual observer; and yet the nation is not merely unsettled, but is touched in many of its parts with a chaotic lack of direction, and in other parts is moved by a spirit of insurgency. The historian of the future will assuredly record that from the time fighting stopped in the

great war England entered upon a new epoch. Likely enough the new epoch will be for all the world as well as for England. But the fact that a country stable in its essentials, progressively moulded by compromise and tenacity through many centuries, should stand out as leader in a new order of things has an element of high drama. Is the story of Rome to be retold, with different settings?

England will emerge in a new shape—that much is certain; but only the inspired prophet can say whether the new shape will be for better or worse. Among our friendly observers abroad there are doubters. They bring to focus an acute vision on our foibles, they discern weaknesses to which we are blind, and they shake their heads at the shams we have buttressed, the hypocrisies we have covered up. It is the end of England, they say. But these people who have not lived amongst us miss perhaps one big fundamental. English self-sufficiency comes partly from temperament, partly from experience. England, to put it bluntly, is not a place of timorous hearts. Whatever may now be changed, the personality of the English people will remain. This personality with its qualities and defects has led a race to world-destiny. Despite many social injustices which continue to exist, it has given the English the happiest home life among all lands. When the new England emerges the old England will be its unfailing inspiration and support.

No one can realize the significance of the present condition of affairs who has not an understanding of

what England was like before the war, and who has not sensed the peculiar spirit of England. Those who live abroad are quite naturally influenced by fragmentary newspaper dispatches, by snippets of foreign policy, and sometimes by the opinions of those who, failing to make a success in their own country, go to another and become the disparagers of their Motherland. But foreigners sometimes get a glimpse of the kind of tie which secures all but an infinitesimal proportion of those who are bred in England. Americans have sometimes pointed out to me with genuine critical wonderment that while men and women of other nationalities who come to the United States and make money and reputation become as a rule citizens of that country, Englishmen, whatever their achievements and whatever their prospects, very rarely indeed relinquish their English nationality. They are always thinking of going home. There is just a touch of exasperation when this is commented on, and the feeling is perfectly natural. England with all its drawbacks remains to her sons, and to a great many who were not born on English soil, the dear Homeland of all the world. She has many exploits in her history. As in other nations her young people are thrilled by the stories of what the courage and persistence of Englishmen have achieved over a great stretch of history. It is strange but true that the overworked and underpaid men or women in the industrious wilderness of the North or of London feel like wine the words of Henley:

Where shall the watchful sun,
  England, my England,
Match the master work you've done,
  England, my own.

When shall we rejoice again
  Such a mighty breed of men
As come forward one to ten
  To the song on your bugles blown.

Take and break us, we are yours,
  England, my own,
Life is good and joy rides high
  Between English earth and sky.

Let me give an extract from a recent letter, Mr. Hutton, who I think gets down to bedrock English sentiment, that sentiment which foreigners find it so hard to understand but which is the basis of a hundred senses and unbreakable memories:

England of my heart is a great country of hill and valley, moorland and marsh, full of woodlands, meadows and all manner of flowers, and everywhere set with steadings and dear homesteads, old farms and old churches of grey stone and flint, and peopled by the gentlest and quietest people in the world. England is not merely what we see. It is of the past, of the future; it is inheritance. There abides a sense of old times gone, of ancient law and friendship, and religious benediction.

In the old days before the war I knew the British Parliament well, and it was with memories thick upon me that I went into the House of Commons one evening near the first anniversary of the signing of the

Armistice. The gathering with its historic setting had the outward semblance of old times, but nevertheless there was instantaneously presented to the accustomed eye the picture of the changed and changing England. Gone were the embattled and coherent forces facing each other from opposite sides of the House. Gone was that solid block of Irish members who used to hold the seats below the gangway on the Opposition Benches. Scattered were the Labour forces, some of them now in opposition, some sprinkled among the Government ranks. On the Front Bench instead of a line of Liberals or a line of Conservatives there was a medley of politicians, Conservatives, Liberals, Labour men, and some individuals drawn from the business world who have never labelled themselves at all. On the Front Opposition Bench appeared a handful of minor personages, some of them Liberals, some Labour, and one or two Conservatives. Personalities were strangely mixed. Mr. T. P. O'Connor, the father of the House, was sitting on the Government side below the gangway, and near him was Lord Robert Cecil, who had emerged from Cecilian traditions to become the leader of the band of Conservatives who are Liberal in thought and ambition. Sir Edward Carson, the occasionally relentless critic of the Government, had a seat on a back bench among the Government supporters. The Opposition side of the House comprised many who gave strong support to the official hierarchy. The house debated things in the mood of expediency. The old ordered line of battle had disappeared.

Suddenly a Government difficulty arose. The Prime Minister, an infrequent visitor to the House in these days, was hurriedly fetched. He came in with slow gait, with heavier shoulders than of yore, and with his hair and moustache, which I remembered as dark in tint, completely silvered in the course of the past three years. His principal opponents of times gone were now at his side as colleagues. As Mr. Lloyd George took his place at the Table I saw on him the heavy marks of the war's responsibilities. There was, however, still the latent fire in his eyes. When he began to speak I had before me a picture probably not seen since the days of the Reform Bill nearly ninety years ago, the picture of a leader so strong personally as to be unchangeable by any individual opponent, a leader who gibed at and lashed his critics, soothed and persuaded restless followers, stimulated to fervour his steady adherents, and commanded and fascinated and overpowered the House of Commons with an almost staggering supremeness. Such a spectacle would have been impossible, however strong the man, if there had been a regular and organized opposition.

The House of Commons silhouetted a country passing through phases hitherto unknown to her history, presaging phases which no man can do more than guess at. The life of a nation like the life of an individual is to some extent a chance affair; a man may have character and capacity as a background, but the irruption of overwhelming emotions will produce effects the nature of which cannot be told in advance. In

ordinary times a man's temperament and ability provide a pretty safe guide as to his course of action and his destiny. But the stronger a man or a nation, the more unaccountable are the results of the great emergencies. England is in the midst of the consequences of a prolonged fight to the death.

I landed at Liverpool from America on July 30, 1919, after two and a half years' absence in the United States, where there were afoot suggestions of a changing England. I came back knowing that eddies on the surface are not always an accurate guide to the main course of the current. Let me set down as factfully as I may some of the things I found. From the moment I stepped off the boat I noticed that people were thinner than in the old days before the war; particularly did this strike one in the case of friends and relations; shortage of food over a long period had apparently had its effect. Travelling from Liverpool to London I had evidence that even now, nine months after the Armistice, there were not the opportunities for food that used to exist. No luncheon car was on the train. When we stopped at Crewe for a few minutes no luncheon baskets were to be obtained at the railway refreshment room, only little cardboard boxes containing a scanty sandwich, a piece of cake, and a banana. The train, like nearly every train I noticed for months to come, was crowded, uncomfortably crowded; some people who could find no seats were standing in the corridors on this journey of 200 miles. Here, indeed, was a contrast to pre-war times, when railway journeys in

England were not only the fastest, but the most comfortable in the world. On arrival in London at Euston station there was another little shock. Previously one stepped from the train on to a platform on the other side of which some thirty feet away there was an endless stream of taxicabs available for passengers. There were a few there on this occasion but they had been ordered in advance, and hundreds of people were left without a vehicle. It was necessary then, and it was necessary for months afterwards, for travellers to order ahead at exorbitant prices taxicabs to meet their trains, or else to proceed to the street or the ingress of the station and try to secure by payment of considerable sums, twice or thrice the old fares, an occasional taxi bringing people to the station. Drivers were not only critical about the price, but also about the destination. It was simply impossible to get one to proceed to a distant suburb; to persuade one to drive to some comparatively nearby point in the middle of London was a task which needed ample recompense.

I drove across London in a private car from Euston in the north-west to the south-western district where I lived, crossing Trafalgar Square, Whitehall, and Westminster Bridge by the way. There was little difference in the external appearance of old London, except that the people on the sidewalks were thicker; but the anti-aircraft gun emplacements were to be seen here and there, and a considerable acreage, previously level greensward, in the parks and commons was under cultivation for vegetables.

That night in the club I again noticed that people were thinner. These were the impressions of my first day in England after two and a half years of absence. Succeeding days and weeks gave me a clearer vision of the difference between the old and the new England. I found that although the best part of a year had elapsed since the Armistice many war inconveniences still thrust themselves to the fore. There was not the same freedom of food as in the old days; milk was scarce as well as highly priced; butter was rationed and could be obtained only in tiny portions if at all in the restaurants; sugar was scanty, and at periods tabloids of saccharine reappeared in the hotels. Meat was good and fairly plentiful, excepting bacon, which though not stinted in quantity was hard, salt, fat, and not to be compared with the crisp and dainty breakfast dish of before the war.

I went out into the country and found the farmers prosperous because of the demand for food. For two generations at least, perhaps for a period reaching back to the repeal of the Corn Laws seventy years ago, people on the land had not had such a good time. On the coast fishermen also were doing well. Indeed, it was almost impossible for any one who possessed a business supplying essential requirements in the shape of food not to make good profits. A similar comment may be made with regard to the industries in the North concerned with the provision of clothing. Those persons who possessed house property were in a fortunate position, in spite of the fact that the Government had im-

posed a restriction against the raising of rents. The war had stopped all building, the progression of demand had gone on as usual, and the consequence was that during the period following the war the existing houses were at a premium and could be sold for 50 per cent. and in some cases 100 per cent. more than they were worth in the beginning of 1914.

All these details that I have sketched were either based upon or connected with the one great all-pervading alteration in the life of the country. It cost more than twice as much to live as it did before the war. Food and clothes, amusement and travelling, furniture and fuel, books and newspapers, everything in the life of the ordinary individual cost from 80 per cent. to 150 per cent. more than they used to. And yet, amazing as it seems, the bulk of people were in their daily life materially better off, and the majority were apparently far more prosperous than ever before. True, there was another side to the question which was continually brought before the notice of the public by strikes or threats of strikes, namely, the alleged discrepancy between the additional cost of commodities and the additional wages of sections of workers. But side by side with this went a vast spending of money, particularly in the cities. Theatres and other places of amusement were crammed to the doors. Vendors of luxuries could not supply the demand. At the Motor Show at Olympia in November, 1919, as many as 50,000 people were present on one day, and thousands of orders were being taken for expensive machines months ahead, and in

many cases hundreds of pounds were paid for merely the option of securing one of the better makes three or four months later. Money was everywhere being spent like water. There was tremendous activity on the Stock Exchange, where new industrial companies were continually being floated to be promptly oversubscribed by a public whose pockets were overflowing with cash. And this was the state of affairs while the national finances were in a perilous condition. We owed eight thousand million pounds, approximately forty billion dollars—a debt for posterity—that was one fact. Another fact was that our revenue was only a little more than half our expenditure, which meant of course that the debt was being continually increased. The Government was faced by an outcry from the Press and from public men against the state of affairs, and made the defence that they were cutting down in every direction, that certain additional expenditure resulting from the war could not be curtailed in a moment, and that in any case there must be heavy additional spending by reasons of the automatic burdens, such for example as pensions which were the effects of the war. It may be asked where, then, did the money come from which so many were spending in such a profuse manner. The answer is simple. The industries of the nation had been given over to war production, and this production had to be paid for by the Government from borrowed money. Thousands of fortunes, large and small, were made in spite of the fact of a special impost on war profits. Continuing demands and continuing expendi-

ture by the Government, which were largely automatic, followed the war, so that borrowed money was increasingly flowing into the pockets of a large number of people. It made everybody feel rich. Really, of course, the community was mortgaging the future. While there were still large sections of the lower paid workers whose lot was not enviable, it was an undoubted fact that the working classes as a whole were very much better off than they had been before the war. There had been exceptional remuneration and practically no unemployment for years. Women and boys had been working in occupations previously closed to them. A flood of money had in consequence burst over all the country, and though it began to show some signs of subsiding, there was still a tremendous amount in currency, a fact which maintained the new and illusive impression that everybody was better off.

Bound up with these facts were new impulses in men and women throughout the land. England for the moment was a changing kaleidoscope. A glimpse of it was to be had in the scene I saw in Parliament.

CHAPTER II

THE MOOD OF THE PEOPLE

IT seems like looking back into the Middle Ages when one takes a glance at the state of things in the country before the war. The English were an easy-going people. Their influence reached over a great part of the world. They did not care very much what foreigners thought of them, being assured that if in respect of any particular matter opinion was hostile, the opinion was faulty and wrongly based. They were making a pretty good living, and it was easy to cause expenditure to balance revenue. For a large part of our income we depended on raw materials from abroad which we turned into manufactured goods and exported all over the world. We had an enormous mercantile fleet, which helped to increase our wealth. On the whole we were going along very well as a nation among nations. True, there were mutterings of discontent, on the one hand from the moneyed class that Mr. Lloyd George by his financial policy had to some extent depleted some of their money; and on the other hand sections of Labour claimed that they were ill-paid and that the conditions of their work were not good enough to enable them to lead a full and healthy life. There was something to be said for both contentions, but the

system of balances and compromises which are part and parcel of British national life gave the propertied classes the opportunity of putting their case in Parliament and of electing to the House of Commons representatives to voice their views if there was sufficient popular support for them, and on the other hand Labour achieved organization not only among the Trade Unions, but in Parliament, which made it very much the most powerful Labour movement in the world, and gave it a strength for action which was sufficient to wipe out the bigger abuses and to proceed steadily with the elimination of the lesser ones, not only those which were a heritage of the past, but also those which sprang into existence from time to time in new trades or new processes. The population of Britain, however, was not dominated by either the rich or the poor, but by the multitude of shades ranging between the two extremes. The fairly comfortable people outnumbered those with grievances by perhaps five to one. In all the vast stretch of population from the workman earning two pounds a week to the professional man or shopkeeper with an income of eight hundred pounds a year, there were here and there discomforts, and, among the lower paid, occasional privations, but as a whole, the population might be described as living as happily as those of any nation on earth. Men for men, women for women, their earnings were better than those of many countries, but were not nearly so good as those in the United States. On the other hand there were compensations which were only to be appreciated by

an older people, compensations to be derived from surroundings, influences, and enjoyments outside the possession of mere money. The domestic life of England, as for generations, was her privilege and her pride. To the overwhelming majority of English people, men and women, a happy home was the summing up of all the good to be obtained from life. The harsher side of rank and fashion occasionally emphasized by foreign observers was not nearly so noticeable as outsiders thought, although of course it had its objectionable phases in the servility which in many cases must be the accompaniment of class distinctions in an old aristocratic country. Against this had to be placed the important fact that despite much advertised cases to the contrary, high position in either the political, the intellectual or the social section carried with it an obligation of good manners, correct speech, and a moral standard. A politician in England convicted of immorality would find his career broken in twenty-four hours. A millionaire who presumed on his money to utter vulgar words in the House of Commons would be ostracized by all the Members. A baronet who broke the moral law would seek in vain for entrance to the drawing-room of a middle-class respectable lawyer—(though a duke might manage it). Class distinctions, too, with all their evils, provided an incentive which no desire for wealth could give. There were young men and young women constantly striving upwards with a view to recognition by those who in higher circles were reckoned better than themselves. Much that was

bad and much that was worthless secured a foothold upon the higher plane, and gave rise at home and abroad to the work of the scoffer in an intonation of voice and an exaggeration of expression. A feudal presumption of superiority could be found in many instances, but inevitably was levelled whenever it came in contact with the real ability of modern English life. Through all classes there ran a civility which by strangers was regarded as a mark of weakness, but which was really a true sign of strength. The London policeman was no servile creature when he touched his hat with his glove and said "Good morning," or when he proceeded to explain to a visitor his way about, or to give protection from the traffic. Geniality was to be found in the cheery greeting of the store-keeper, the inevitable "Thank you" of the car conductor in receiving his fare, the courtesy of the postman, and the pleasant helpfulness of the railway guard. No countryman or farmer passed you in a lonely rural lane at evening whether you were a stranger or an acquaintance without a cheery "Good-night." And in the fishing villages around our coasts, the blue-guernsied fisherman would offer you a word about the weather as part of his greeting. In these things lay much of the spirit of old England.

We owed about seven hundred million pounds, about three and one-half billion dollars, as a national debt which we were reducing each year by payments from our revenue. Then in 1914 there burst upon the country war at a time when war was hateful to nine-

tenths of the population. Within a few months the life of the community was turned upside down. Factories engaged in making goods for our trade abroad as well as needs at home were converted into places to make munitions for fighting. Existing dockyards and arsenals were swelled into huge cities; new ones were built. Vast sums were voted by Parliament as the beginning of a great debt which posterity alone can repay. As the months went on, practically the whole adult male population under fifty years of age was engaged directly or indirectly in war work. Hundreds of thousands of women also were drawn into war occupations, a large proportion of them taking the place of men who had gone out to do the fighting. As the war progressed hardship as well as tragedy descended on all the land. Deaths by the hundred thousand of our young manhood were reported. At home food not only soared in price, but was strictly limited in extent. Even little children had to go without their proper supply of milk. Streets in our cities at night, because of the raids by German aircraft, had to be darkened to the extent that curbstones were whitened to give a faint indication to pedestrians against mishaps in crossing the road. Raids by Zeppelins and aeroplanes were borne bravely, but were painfully felt by everyone, especially by the mothers with families. In hundreds of thousands of homes barricades of mattresses were built up in the lower rooms for protection at night when the dread signals were given. Poor women with their children round

them sought refuge in the subways, and many of them travelled to and fro by the underground trains for five or six hours continuously in order to escape the chances of death for themselves and their offspring. Through all the misery of life during this period it can be truly said that the underlying thought of all the people, rich and poor, was that Germany should be beaten. All went for nought if this could be accomplished. Lack of food, scanty clothing, danger by night and day not only on the battlefield, but in the hitherto peaceful streets and countryside of old England, were all swamped by that dominating impulse. Victory came. Relief and exultation surged throughout the land. The difficulties of the future were forgotten for the moment in the relaxation of tightened nerves, in the sure and certain knowledge that no more would Death reap its daily harvest among men at the front.

After this came the months of negotiations for the Peace Treaty, and at this time forces at home began to show signs of confusion and future dangers, the inevitable sequel of a convulsion in national life. The colossal war industries could not be stopped at a moment's notice, for who knew what the ensuing month or two would bring forth? There was, of course, some diminution. Much talk there was of the rebuilding of industries or the installation of new ones, of the increase later in our foreign trade. Little was done. By means of borrowed money everybody's pockets were full. Masses of the population who had lived from hand to mouth had found means of comfortable occupation

during the war and were, comparatively speaking, well off. Tradesmen, in spite of the difficulty of selling and buying, had made big profits. Firms engaged in war work, notwithstanding the imposition of a heavy excess profits-tax, were rolling in money. Dependents of killed and injured were receiving pensions and allowances previously unthought of. Men discharged from the Army were allowed certain sums of money. In the mood of spendthrifts we were enjoying ourselves on borrowed money while financial disadvantages were piling up all around us from causes inseparable from the impoverishment of Europe, our chief customer, and from our own need of imports from America. It looked as if British people had suddenly become thoughtless and reckless. There is at least an element of truth in the suggestion. It was, however, but one of many symptoms of the new England, and they were all more or less linked up together.

The mood of individuals as well as of the country has been changed by the events of the past five years. The British for good or evil are a dangerous and ugly people when stirred. Placid on the exterior, they are probably the least docile and the most tenacious of rebellion of any people on earth. In eruption they are not pleasant to deal with, either at home or abroad. There is a new carelessness afoot. It has to be remembered that practically every family has lost one or more of those near and dear to it in the war. Every family has been under the pressure of actual privation for years. That has produced a state of mind and mood

which helps to make people reckless in the spending of money, never so plentiful. It helps towards the grim attitude of the Labour people who are determined to have some of the good things of life hitherto denied to them. But there are changes in other directions, too; changes in the hard and fast opinions of men to whom political loyalty was something at least as important as religion itself. I found bewildering alterations in men's opinions everywhere. Some Labour leaders who had held high responsibility had become almost Conservative in their tendencies. Some Conservatives had broadened and widened into advanced Liberals. Mr. Walter Long, a Cabinet Minister, and for a generation one of the most hardened and bitter opponents of Home Rule for Ireland, has become convinced that Ireland must have a Home Rule far in advance of that against which he had so long fought. Lord Robert Cecil, a descendant of aristocrats whose family has been imbued with Tory traditions from the time of Queen Elizabeth, has become in all the big matters of policy, an advanced Liberal. Those are but two instances out of many.

One of the signs of the new mood or series of moods through which the country is passing is the fever for speculation, or in plain words, for gambling. The plenitude of ready money helps the thing on, but the root of the matter is in the new unsettlement, the restlessness, the desire for excitement, the effort to forget tragedy and to enter upon some kind of counteracting stimulant. To some extent it is the sequel of

the high-strung tension of war days. Millions had taken chances with life and death; why not chances with money where at least the penalty for failure was not the loss of one's life. Once a habit is started among people it grows and spreads by itself. Many persons who have not the slightest natural liking for gambling find themselves sliding into new courses, and, such is the atmosphere, without particular desire to avoid its continuance or its results. In London, where before the war bridge was almost a fashion to the exclusion of all other card games, there is a diligent pursuit of poker. Reasonably good players of bridge have temporarily forsaken their old love.

The prevalent tendency is demonstrated on the Stock Exchange. There are repeatedly minor booms in speculative stocks. More than that the public rush to take up shares in the new industrial flotations which are put upon the market by the score. At the beginning of the week, a favourite time for new issues, there may sometimes be as many as fifty columns of prospectuses advertised in the papers. And the eagerness of the public, of course, multiplies the new issues. It cannot be doubted that many speculators will have a melancholy awakening if they have not already experienced it. I know of one company which asked for £300,000 for some speculative industrial activities. It possessed only £100,000 worth of equipment and openly stated that the other £200,000 was represented by options which on the face of them were doubtful. The public sent in applications not for £300,000 but for £1,250,000.

Such is the spirit of gambling when it seizes a country.

I can best summarize the mixed volume of impulses in England by setting out some individual illustrations. Each case may be multiplied by thousands, and it is the commingled reactions among the whole body of the population which produces the new confused condition of affairs with its hazards for the future:

(1) The middle-aged mother who has lost one son in the war and who has one now at home. Mingled grief and relief cause her to idolize her remaining child. Nothing is too good for him. If she has some money he is encouraged to enjoy himself. "Think what the poor boy has been through!" He, a young fellow in the twenties not better or worse than other young men of his age, himself relaxed after the war thinks more of having a good time than of settling down to work. He goes to swell the throng who are seeking seats in advance at the theatre.

(2) The young working man safely returned from the war who has been wounded and is now restored to health. He has a little money in his pockets by reason of allowances. He has been through a terrible period in which he has measured himself against the aristocrats to whom he used metaphorically to touch his hat. He has found them as brave as himself, and he has found himself as brave as them and of equal value to his country. He left a grinding weekly occupation with a chance of being out of work ever before him with a struggle for fresh occupation for himself and his

family. He comes back with a new independence, almost a desperate independence. Why should the manifold enjoyments of life be shut off from him and his? He is filled with bitterness that the manufacturers and traders should without the dangers of fighting have made automatically large profits out of the war.

(3) The young married man of the artisan or clerk type who after two or three years of open-air life and physical training has inwardly resolved that never again will he subject himself permanently to a soul-corroding existence at two pounds or three pounds a week in office or factory. He is thinking of emigrating to the overseas Dominions or America, or else of securing a farm in the country, or of some kind of business for himself. He has no inclination for violent revolution in the country, but all the same he is determined that his life shall be changed in the future. His impulses are not the less strong for being somewhat vague.

(4) The political enthusiast who had all his notions turned upside down by the issues of life and death, possibly for himself, certainly for some members of his family. He has seen men he has genially despised, like the labouring folk, prove themselves not only heroes but men of mind. (A young working miner in Wales who enlisted as a private rose to be a general.) If he is of the opposite brand of politics he has seen the aristocrats whom he held in contempt rise to heights of self-sacrifice; that they should have gracious manners in the face of death added a lustre which to him is imperish-

able. While he instinctively clings to certain labels of party politics he knows in his heart that he is prepared to throw them all over.

(5) The mother of a large family in whom the ingrained love of her country has battled with the desire for the safety of her sons, and at the end of the war, now that her boys are safe, feels that the only tangible results of the conflict have been the fact that she has to pay twice as much for everything which makes life tolerable for her family. The increase in her income is not equal to the increase in the cost of what she has to buy. She is bitter against the shop-keepers, indifferent to the politicians, and demands to know what England has got out of the war except suffering.

(6) The man who has made money out of trade or manufactures during the past four years, and who previous to 1914 was worth a few hundreds of pounds and is now worth anything from ten thousand pounds to one hundred thousand pounds. He is sending his sons to Oxford and Cambridge and he and his friends are filling the hotels, buying country houses, giving orders for motor-cars, booking boxes at the theatres, and he is morally certain that all is for the best in this best of possible worlds.

(7) The middle class father who has lost all his sons in the war, and who does not care what shape politics take; who has become silent and reserved and to whom in general the world has become an empty place. He used to make himself felt within his circle in politics, local or national. He has slipped away from it all.

(8) The thoughtful leader who with opinions of his own has never been violently inclined and who with mind saddened by the events of the war has mentally emerged into the determination that so far as he is concerned there shall be no more wars short of those of national defence against invasion or flagrant aggression. He willingly throws all his old party allegiances into the furnace of new emotions. He is a stronger man with clearer vision and with fixed determinations.

These are but samples from a hundred grades of changed men and women. From the combination of all of them and their effects on the body politic the new England is to shape itself.

CHAPTER III

IN THE MELTING POT

IT was at the end of 1919 that I went to a West End store of a famous London hat-making firm which in the old days was a recognized rendezvous for men in the mode. A silk hat by "X" was part of the hall mark of a well dressed man. I remember well the array of glossy headwear which used to be one of the sights of the store. What a change was there on my last visit! There were still many customers at the long counters, young officers recently demobilized seeking civilian garb, clergymen from the country, and business men. They were buying bowler hats, and soft grey felts. One man was rejecting the fashionable trilby for a wide-brimmed slouch hat of an American make. The difference from pre-war days was that there were no silk hats to be seen. It so happened that I wanted one. There used to be an endless stock in various sizes and in differing fashionable shapes. I found that in this, probably the largest and best known hat store in London, they had not an ordinary-sized silk hat to fit me. They had to make one. When I asked the reason for this surprising necessity I was told that silk hats had gone almost completely out of fashion for everyday wear, whether in the City or West End.

They were used now practically only for formal occasions or possibly here and there by individuals going out in evening dress at night. "There is no demand for them. People do not want to wear silk hats any more; I do not know if they ever will again. Besides, it is difficult to get the men to make these hats now; the process is an arduous and unpleasant one, and though the wages are good the men simply do not care about doing the work."

The departure of the silk hat may seem a trivial illustration, but it is a sign of the times. The war brought about its elimination, and peace-time has confirmed the change. "Keeping up appearances" is not so important as it was, or at any rate the method has altered. And workmen are shying at unpleasant and unhealthful work.

There is very little of the exclusive first-class travelling which used to be one of the features of the British railways. With all the lines overladen with traffic, especially on the routes in and around the great cities, people throng into all the carriages irrespective of the class or the tickets which they hold. As a matter of fact the third-class accommodation is almost as comfortable as the first-class, and the luxury of the latter used to be due principally to the fact that there were fewer travellers and more room. All that has gone by the board. Indeed, during the rush hours in London the travelling inspectors do not attempt to inspect the first-class passengers. All but a tithe of them have third-class tickets and they fill not only the seats but all the

standing room in first- as well as third-class carriages. To attempt to exclude them would only lead to a further congestion at the stations, and I am not sure whether it would be tolerated by the public. People must have trains to ride to work in. Conditions are bad enough now, and any worsening of them might easily be responsible for the storming of the trains by the waiting crowds.

High wages and increased salaries do not meet the necessary increase of expenditure by many sections of the public, with the result that there is mental rebellion or dull resignation in tens of thousands of families, while in other parts of the community men and women are better off than they have been before. Shop-keepers are undoubtedly securing greater profits, for it is an almost inevitable temptation to the trader to make himself safe with a margin of price over and above that which is justified by the extra charges to which he is subjected. There are great transpositions of wealth, not only in the very large amounts but in those moderate sums which make the difference between struggle and comfort. The material aspect of life is changed in some measure for better or worse to nearly everyone. The office boy of 14 or 15 requires 18 shillings a week instead of the 8 shillings with which he started in pre-war days. Not a month went by during 1919 when there were not serious demands from industries for increased wages—demands which in nearly every case met with success. Meanwhile the respectable old couple who had retired on their savings which had brought

them in just about enough to keep them, found that not only was their income depleted by extra taxation but that prices for all commodities had gone up more than a hundred per cent. The old couple are but typical of a considerable proportion of the population who have a small fixed income to live upon. It is a fact that in the case of some of the working classes higher wages do not meet the higher prices, but on the other hand there are many cases in which they do, and inasmuch as there is comparatively little unemployment in spite of demobilization it can be said with assurance that the working classes materially are better off than they were before the war. That, of course, does not necessarily mean that they are satisfied, or indeed that it is right and just to expect them to be satisfied.

There is a general unsettlement throughout the land although it is not altogether a painful unsettlement; it runs through nearly all grades of society and all phases of activity. New conditions are apparent in many directions, and serious as some of them are they carry their full weight only as a portent for the future. The coming life of England is a riddle, a riddle which has an appeal to the gambler, because its answer may mean danger, possibly disaster, or may set forth a new prosperity. The riddle is compacted to some extent of new feelings, but also very largely of new facts. There can be but few amongst us who do not know that the conditions in England are artificial, that they are leading us on to an unknown goal. There

is a plenitude of new money, and a plenitude of new discomforts; both are of insignificant import compared to that which lies behind the screen of which they form a part. The life of England, self-contained to some extent, cannot be divorced from the life of other nations, particularly from nations on the continent of Europe. Propinquity is as important a consideration between countries as it is between individuals. If France starves, England will assuredly feel the pangs of hunger. If Italy cannot pay her debts there will be serious entries on the debit side of England's balance sheet. If Germany cannot manufacture goods, a valuable part of England's markets go by the board. While Russia continues in revolution the reverberations of revolt touch many circles in England and set in a quiver part of our nervous system. The geographical nearness of these and other countries makes them a serious influence on English life, but by reason of other facts a nation much farther removed, namely, America, has become a powerful influence on the future of England. America is one of the supply depots of the world, and from her England must draw much sustenance, sustenance which will enable her to extend to the weaker nations of Europe (and they are all weaker than England) the help which they so sorely need, and which by its reactions will help England herself. Is America going to fail England? Who knows? It is foolish to ignore the widespread prejudice against this country which exists in the United States. American travellers, American leaders of thought are as a whole sympathetically dis-

posed towards England, but that does not mean that the country is in that frame of mind. I believe it would be to the material interests as well as the moral interests of America to help England, and thus to take a part in the stabilizing of a world tottering from the effects of war. I see no certain signs that America is going to help England. One part of the riddle is what will happen if America reverts to an isolation which she alone among the nations of the earth can afford to maintain.

England's anxieties, however, go far beyond this. The Bolshevism of Russia, triumphant within the boundaries of that country, shows signs of percolating towards parts of the British Empire, such for instance as India. It looks as if the reign of the Bolsheviks in Russia is assured, and if that is so it is impossible to doubt that the effects of this system will in time be felt in countries whenever there is any ground for discontent among sections of the people. (Is there any country in existence where grounds for discontent do not exist, or where it is possible they should not exist?)

It is systematic of the psychology of England that the crisis in Ireland excites but a philosophic shrug of the shoulders. An integral part of the British Isles has by a majority of three to one voted in favour of entire separation from the nation with a view to the setting up of a separate form of government. This is secession with a vengeance. Ireland is part of a national whole and cannot be allowed to fly a foreign flag. England wants to have practically any form of Home Rule she will agree to. Will it come to bloodshed? Things can-

not be continued as they are. One would think that this problem alone was enough for England to worry her head about. As things are it is only one matter out of many in which the future life of the country is involved.

The upset of the money exchanges is producing a position of affairs in all European countries of extreme danger to the fabric of commerce, and this means in the ultimate result danger to the supply of food, clothing and shelter for all the people of all the countries. There used to be a stable ratio of value between the different coinages, fluctuating in fractional points but for practical purposes very constant. Now since the war there have been not merely sweeping changes, but sweeping changes progressively. The English sovereign has gone down in New York and gone up on the continent of Europe. The continual sliding of the exchanges is bringing about a situation in which no business man can reckon accurately what is going to be the worth tomorrow or next week of the coin of another country, or indeed for that matter, of his own country. Such being the case the world is retrogressing towards exchange by barter, a cargo of wheat against a cargo of cotton, or whatever it may be. Currency is losing its value as a means of exchanging goods. This did not matter so much in the bow and arrow stage of life, but with the present interdependence of countries with their different products it may mean disastrous chaos, and if continued will ensure the ruin of tens of thousands, the impoverishment of millions and actual hardship for the vast

majority of human beings in Europe, not excluding England.

Placid on the surface but disturbed in spirit by the events of the past five years, the English people are displaying that independence which through many centuries has been manifested by them in the great crises. The English are not a hasty, nervous, impetuous race. They are deliberate, and in ordinary circumstances like slowness (if only for the reason that it is bottomed by thoroughness). They rather enjoy being respectful to the aristocracy, a fact which sometimes causes Americans to think us stolid, if not subservient. In reality the English unite with a capacity for what may be called the peaceful enjoyment of life, a rugged and regardless temper, the permanent determination of which cannot be matched outside the Anglo-Saxon race. It is a case of stand from under when that spirit begins to manifest itself. Even in the days when there was no democratic mood worth speaking of, when power, passing from the misused kingly prerogative of George III to the land owners, was in the hands of what was little more than a group of the people, there was nearly an outbreak which in some of its results might have equalled that of the French Revolution. England was on the verge of open revolt in 1832, at the time of the Reform Bill. There have been occasional convulsions since then which have shown that though the English will stand a lot, they are untameable when they have taken the bit between their teeth.

After the Armistice in 1918 there were months of

waiting for any large demobilization. Millions of soldiers ready enough to sacrifice themselves when their country was in danger were in no mood to continue wearing khaki just for the sake of remaining a part of the great Army. Not very great publicity was given to the incipient revolts of soldiers in various parts of England during the early months of 1919. But concessions had to be made, and demobilization hurried on. It is a fact that the English authorities, had they been unwise enough to attempt it, simply could not have kept millions of men in khaki for an indefinite time. These mutterings were but the precursor to other indications of feeling which, though not similar, were related.

The Trade Unions found their numbers swelling by hundreds of thousands, and within the year they were multitudes ahead of their numbers in the period before the war. Vast sums of money borrowed from posterity had been raised to be paid into the pockets of those who were concerned in supplying the needs for war, needs which were multitudinous as well as tremendous in extent. Fortunes, large and small, were everywhere heard of. Labour, that is to say working men and women, forming as they did the bulk of the population, were in no state of mind to look on calmly while prices mounted to more than double what they were before the war; while their wages were not increased to a similar amount or more. The human suffering in the war percolated through practically every family, and it left not a softer but a harder spirit.

And so it came about that continued demands were made on employers, demands which had to be conceded. There were ever-increasing indications that Labour members in Parliament would be enormously added to in number at the next election. By-elections now make that startlingly clear. Some of our English Bourbons shrug their shoulders in a kind of philosophic indifference at the "work of these agitators," and the presumptions of those who had been misled by street corner orators. The wiser heads do nothing of the kind. The latter see that this is no sporadic burst of indignation, no weak outcry from a selfish or lazy few. It is one of the signals for a coming storm, a storm which may threaten an engulfing and a destruction. In the autumn of 1919, nearly a year after the Armistice, there came a sign of the forces which Fate was stirring up. Railways overburdened with work were one of the vital parts of the community. At twenty-four hours' notice all the railwaymen of the country came out on strike for better pay for some of the lower grade men; it was a strike not against employers but against the Government who were in control of the railways. There were days of anxious negotiation. Then the Government, swearing it would ne'er consent, consented. Despite the explanations of statesmen that the Government had won, despite the disapproval of some moderate Labour leaders about the methods, the railwaymen had indeed won. They had held the country up to ransom and triumphed. Perhaps their conditions entitled them to hold the country up to ransom. That for the moment is beside the

point. The essential thing is that they actually did so and that they succeeded. The lesson of that strike went deep into the consciousness of the nation. The coming year or two, nay, the coming months, are pregnant with history.

What the world will find out within a comparatively short period is whether the system of government in this country is sufficiently elastic, sufficiently strong to meet the dangers within and without. Is it likely that a republic will be established? Can a revolution be effected by means of the present machinery at the disposal of the British people?

The dominant lesson for historians, neutral, hostile or benevolent, will be found in the great experiment which before long will approach its climax—whether the Government of England as by law and custom established can meet the needs and demands of the times, or whether it must be replaced by an improved apparatus which shall more efficiently carry out the will of the people.

CHAPTER IV

THE GOVERNANCE OF ENGLAND

IF I were asked whether the form of government of any one of the great powers outside England (including America) would be of sufficient strength, resilience, and adaptability to remain unaltered through the shocks which in some degree are inevitable in England, I should give it as my opinion that in no instance would there be an escape from radical and possibly revolutionary change. That being the judgment of a foreigner with regard to other nations, some of which are under a republican system, what must be the feelings of outsiders who realize the dangers to Britain and who see us under an hereditary monarchy which with all its democratic ameliorations still remains an integral and powerful part of our national life? Their feelings, moreover, would be coloured by the knowledge that the descent from father to son still gives the right of entry to the House of Lords, and that woven into the fabric of our constitution are a thousand remnants of ancient rite. No one could wonder at the decision which would be formed. The average American for example would certainly forecast the coming of a Republic. He might be right. Revolution, peaceful or violent, may indeed emerge from the tumult of facts and feelings with which

the English people are surrounded. But to one who knows intimately the public and private life of England it is at least conceivable that there will be no drama of the revolutionary kind. The constitution of England, like the spirit of an Englishman, is to the uninitiated deceptive in its apparent contradictions and has a peculiar capacity for bearing strain. Possibly the coming strain may be too great. We shall at any rate not have long to wait for the verdict.

There is a vague idea among a good many people abroad that England, still under the archaic rule of monarchy and aristocracy, remains subject in essence to authoritarian domination, and that life among the common people is characterized by the servility of old times. There persists a picture of the King on his throne with a sceptre in his hand issuing demands, breaking one statesman, making another, suggesting how laws should be made, or unmade, and generally exercising a more or less genial tyranny which the exigencies of the time cause to be glossed over by reference to the activities of Parliament and the growing power of Labour leaders. The fact that this picture is farcical to Englishmen makes it none the less real to hundreds and thousands of people far removed from British shores. What are the facts?

For many long centuries the British people have with fluctuating but with ever increasing success sought to secure self-expression and the effect of their communal will in the government of the country. There have been tragic periods of intrigue, of failure. Tyrants

temporarily in power have checked the current of impulses, and put blots on British history. Different classes and different sets of people have set their hands to the task at crucial periods. It was the Barons at Runnymede nearly a thousand years ago, it was the Puritans in Stuart times, it was a mixture of steady minded politicians and soldiers in 1688 when William of Orange was invited from a foreign land to come and take control of a determined people.

New springs of impulse ran tumultuously through the land following the French and American revolutions towards the end of the eighteenth century, and the almost supreme power of the landed aristocracy was taken from them in 1832 when the vote was given to the middle classes of Britain. Successive Reform Acts widened the suffrage until in the period just before the war all men with a certain fixity of habitation had a vote in the election of the House of Commons. That House of Commons had for many generations been looked upon as the real authority for the government of the country. It was in the time of the Stuarts that Mr. Speaker Lenthall, challenged in person by the monarch to point out five offending members of the House, replied: "I have neither eyes to see nor tongue to speak in this place but as this House is pleased to direct me to see and desires me to speak." The power of imposing taxation and of raising revenue was reserved exclusively to the House of Commons as distinct from the House of Lords. The jealous care of the Commons against intrusion by Royalty I have illustrated.

They were just as jealous of the intrusion of the Lords from whom power had successively gravitated in the course of time to the other chamber. To this day there is continued a ceremony which the unreflecting mind thinks of merely as a relic of centuries ago. Any night the proceedings of the House of Commons are liable to be interrupted by some formal communication from the House of Lords, which is about one hundred yards distant, aligned with the Commons and united by a wide corridor which leads from the entrance of one House to the entrance of the other. There is always a certain amount of formality when messages have to pass between the two Houses. The House of Lords sends down a well-known functionary called "Black Rod" with a bill or a message. It is the immediate duty of the uniformed attendants in the House of Commons when they see "Black Rod" approach from the House of Lords to shut fast the large swing-door of the Commons in his face. With ceremony a large key is inserted in the lock of the door, and turned so that everybody in the House can hear the click of the bolt. Then the attendant in the Commons opens a little wicket gate a foot square in the upper panels of the big door and demands who it is that requires admission. He receives a formal answer. After that with the Speaker's assent the door is unlocked and "Black Rod" is allowed to enter. That little function signifies a great deal.

For a long time the House of Commons has been the chief instrument for the country's government, although for the passing of laws the assent was required

not only of the Commons but of the Lords and of the King. The King's assent may be taken as nominal. The assent of the Lords has up to recent times not been nominal, and the Peers have been able to retard progressive legislation and sometimes to block it altogether. That power was taken away from them in 1912 by a government of which Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George were the leaders. Money bills now become law if the House of Lords has not assented to them within one month after they have been sent up to their chamber. Other bills the Lords may retard but cannot kill. A measure passed in three successive sessions by the House of Commons and rejected by the House of Lords in each of those sessions became law by the assent only of the King and the Commons.

What is known as the British Constitution, namely, the recognized system of government, is partly written, partly embodied in law, partly regulated by custom, and as a whole has been moulded by common sense, enterprise, and tenacity over a period of centuries. It is a living pliable organization dependent not on the formal authority of any one generation but on the spirit in being of the whole of the people. The needs of the time lead to changes and adaptations, but the Constitution is never really vitally altered because the motives inspiring it have a continuous relation to each other. For want of a better compendium those impulses may be styled the character of the English people.

If I were asked the outstanding feature of the British Constitution, I should say it was respect for

law; law, some parts of it put into words by statute, other parts of it of wider and deeper application which have no set phrases on record. To that general law, as the history of England clearly shows, kings and governors are subject as well as the common people. Traditions and immediate needs, failures and achievements, all have contributed from the time of Runnymede towards its development and strengthening. Reverence for the good that is in old things goes with it, side by side with a sturdy independence which, patient in adversity, will presently overthrow tyranny from whatever quarter it comes.

The people of England are a conservatively progressive race. They are continually making small steps forward which they never retrace, but they hate to take big jumps. People abroad have sometimes asked me as to when we are going to have a republic in England, because in some political directions Britain is the most advanced country in the world and it seems an incredible anomaly that there should be preserved an hereditary monarch as the head of a democracy. There is always surprise when I have explained that nothing has been further from the thoughts of even the advanced democrats than a change in our monarchial system. For a period of ten years up to the beginning of the war I was present at most of the representative gatherings of the Labour leaders and did not miss one of the annual Trade Union Congresses, which is really Labour's Parliament. The policies and proposals which were discussed at these meetings ranged from

simple administrative propositions to wide schemes of industrial and political action. On not one occasion from one individual or from any organization was there a proposal for a republican form of government. The explanation is that the English are, whatever their theories, a severely practical people. The monarch under test has been found to be a useful institution. He is the nominal head of the nation with the duty of putting in power such governors as the nation demands. He is the pivot on which may be made to revolve any kind of policy that people want. Sometimes persons have inquired as to what would happen if the King should exert his authority and try to pass a law over the head of Parliament or should veto a law which Parliament wishes put into effect. The best answer to that is to say he is powerless to do either. But how can such be the case when by the Constitution it is necessary to have his assent to all measures before they become law? To answer that it is necessary to give an example of what would occur. In the first place it has to be understood that the existence of any government depends upon the fact that that government possesses a majority in the House of Commons. It is the House of Commons which raises taxes and which finds money for the payment of the Army, Navy, and Civil Services. Suppose the British were ever unfortunate enough to have a monarch who determined to try to exercise his prerogative against the will of the House of Commons. He refuses to sign a bill which the majority of the Commons have endorsed—the majority being that of the

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Government for the time being. That same day the Cabinet, who are responsible for the King's action, since they are his advisers, will resign because the monarch has failed to follow their advice. The monarch, still pursuing his fit of mental aberration, tries to get a set of men who will act as a Cabinet. He will almost certainly fail to do so. But supposing he succeeds and the new Cabinet takes office, they will find themselves confronted by a hostile House of Commons who will automatically vote down every proposition and suspend the functions of Parliament. The normal course of events will then be an immediate general election. Of the result of the election there cannot be the slightest doubt. Incidentally the monarch will have gambled with his throne. But the affair will never go to this length, for directly the authority of the Commons is challenged it is inevitable that on its own account it will take such action as will for ever end any chance of even nominal opposition to the desires of the community. History has shown that the British people had, even in days when the popular will had little or no adequate means to express itself, a very short way with kings who persistently were overbearing.

Securely guarded from any ill-effects of kingship on the practical side, England finds kingship an excellent medium for political action. The monarch asks a political leader to form a Government, and selects that particular leader because he is the chosen head of his political supporters. The King then appoints a dozen or twenty men to form a Cabinet—it is the Prime

Minister who has nominated them. The King delivers a first person speech at the opening of Parliament, it is the Cabinet who are responsible for the words of the speech. The King distributes honours. Those honours are given on the nomination of the Prime Minister. The King dissolves Parliament. He only does so on the recommendation of the Government of the day. He calls into being another Government; his action is the result of a general election which has shown a majority for a certain party.

The King has not a tenth part of the personal power and initiative of the President of the United States. On the other hand he has an effectiveness as an institution which from its very nature cannot be equalled by any temporary elective chief. He is the continuing symbol of British history in every race and every time. A family which has achieved distinction is proud of itself, and the memories of its past members are an inspiration to successors. The unspotted honour of predecessors of the same name and same blood—the garlands they have won by outstanding personal qualities, are at once a revered possession, a pride and an unfailing stimulus. It is the same with nations. The chequered history of England is a great drama—it is not all of it praiseworthy, but taken as a whole it is one of the epics of mankind. In the Witanagemot a thousand years or more ago England laid the foundation of the legislative assembly which was to become the pattern of parliaments for all nations of the earth. Her literature from Chaucer, on through Shakespeare, Milton, down to

Scott and Dickens has illuminated the heart of mankind. The struggles for religious liberty demonstrated even before the Reformation, carried on after the departure of the Pilgrim Fathers has been one of the glories of her history books. In war she has not often failed although she has occasional scars, as for instance in connection with the American Revolution, but even here it has to be pointed out that it was Englishmen in revolt who fought against a tyrannical king and a sycophantic government.

By virtue of intangible qualities hard to define and yet very practical and definite in their results, the Englishman, having set his foot in any part of the world, has not failed to remain and to extend his influence. There are few who will gainsay the statement that the Dominions of the British Empire have tended for the betterment of conditions in the world. England began her roll of history back in the midst of obscurity. The simplicity and kindness of an early king is one of the legends of British schools—Alfred and the Cakes is a classic. Proceeding from military chieftainship through various phases, with some set-backs and some unworthy passages, the monarch evolved through political headship into the impartial chairman of a vast people. He is one link of an unbroken chain reaching back to the mists of obscurity. The English, practical in all outward things, have what pedants might call a vein of illogicality in the romance and reverence buried deep within their hearts. Life is made up of emotions as well as of food and drink and railways and telephones.

There has been an adaptation of kingship, kingship which has departed far from its original motives and purposes. It still remains as a web on which they may weave their patterns of future national life. Is it suitable for the impelling facts, the new visions, the immediate emotions which will decide the picture England is to present to history of the future?

There have been vast changes in the body politic of Britain since the time of William the Conqueror in the 11th century. Those who are fond of history and can draw lessons from it will be interested in a visit to the House of Lords on one of those occasions—there are several during any one session—when the King's formal assent to measures passed by Parliament is given by a commission of three or four peers who for the moment represent the monarchy. The name of each bill is read out and a bewigged official announces the King's assent to it in the old Norman French words, "Le Roy le veult." Those words are in direct descent from the Norman conquest of England.

The malleable nature of the British Constitution, responsive only to the instincts of the community, make the system of governing England into the likeness of a living person who, with increasing years and responsibility, acquires new qualities, develops new manners, equips himself with new powers, mental or material, to fit his ever changing environment. The elasticity of the Constitution makes it not less respected, not less enforcible, but, on the contrary, curious as it may seem, adds to it almost a sanctity of record, and

an unshakable authority. The fluidity of the system can be evidenced in detail as well as in the wider issues. Here is an example: The procedure of the House of Commons, and the model for all public meetings and public discussions, has been built up with many modifications through long years. The outline of procedure is embodied in an official manual the last edition of which was published in 1908. In this, what may be called the Bible of procedure of the oldest legislature in the world, you may find at least one uncompleted rule gravely set down in its truncated form as follows: "2. If any member be suspended under this order, his suspension on the first occasion—" The rest of the rule is obliterated. This is an indication that the procedure a few years ago was under revision, that public business interrupted its course and that this portion of a rule, which means nothing as it stands, was set down as part and parcel of the whole of an order of the House with a view to its completion, when the House should take up once more the regulations of its own affairs.

It was inevitable that the convulsion of the country arising from its plunge into war and all the events arising from the tremendous transition should have an effect on the ever changeful nature of the Constitution. To meet the needs of the hour changes were made which in ordinary times would have taken a generation to mature. One of the most important was that which gave the vote to a much larger portion of the community, including women. The Reform Act was passed in

1918, and redistributed the seats over the country on a basis more in accord with the population and raised the numbers of members of the House of Commons from six hundred and seventy to seven hundred and seven. The following table shows in approximate figures the effect of the four Reform Acts in England, of which that of 1918 is the latest:

1832: 500,000 new voters. Total on register 1,000,000. (One in 24 of the population.)

1867: 1,000,000 new voters. Total on register 2,500,000. (One in 12 of the population.)

1884: 2,000,000 new voters. Total on register 5,000,000. (One in 7 of the population.)

1918: 13,000,000 new voters (including women, and soldiers between 19 and 21 years of age). Total on register 21,300,000. (Nearly one in two of the population.)

The cumulative effects of this sweeping change will make itself felt as the years progress. It is too early even to guess at the ultimate results. True it is that the election immediately following the passing of the Act just after the Armistice was under the new conditions, but it was an election in the flush of victory in which the war Government was bound to be returned with a swamping majority. Such indeed was what happened. Women, soldiers, the larger part of the Labour voters, Liberals and Conservatives all united to put once more in power Mr. Lloyd George and his Government.

While the war thus produced a permanent measure of increased power for the community at large, it also brought into being some new methods of centralized

government, inevitable in war time, which may have other effects in one way and another on administration in the future. The power of the House of Commons passed largely into the hands of the executive as it was bound to do. The Cabinet issued orders to the country at large without explaining in detail as to why those orders were issued. Members of the House of Commons were prevented by patriotism from raising any trouble about what they thought might be injustices in individual instances. No king or president who ever existed exerted a more autocratic control over not only the lives and property, but the domestic habits of every individual, than did the Prime Minister during those years of struggle. Governing Acts of Parliament were passed giving powers to various departments of the executive to issue orders with all the force of law. It was all very necessary. The community not only acquiesced but strongly supported the Government in the restrictions it put upon personal comfort and on the demands it made for the blood of the young manhood of the country. There was no grumbling and no repining. And the result justified the means.

But now that the war is over there remain legacies of those years of autocratic control. The English do not take kindly to being led blindfolded. To do Mr. Lloyd George's government justice it seems to have made efforts towards the old state of affairs, but where authority has been conferred on departments, to say nothing of highly placed individuals, it is hard indeed for a people once again to secure the light of publicity

and to remove the guiding lines which were put up in the day of emergency. There are rumblings throughout the land. The signs of war autocracy have not yet disappeared. That they will go into limbo there is no doubt under the gathering tide of the new ideas and new emotions which are surging up through the cities and the countryside.

There is another feature of war time which still persists which in its present form may be broken down at any moment but which is bound to leave its mark on the Government and the country during the present generation. The coalition of parties for the prosecution of the war has destroyed for the time being the ancient and well tried method of two great opposing parties in Parliament representing divergent lines of thought, and each striving in turn to secure the power of guiding and governing the nation. In course of time there is not the slightest doubt that Britain will return in effect to this division of parties which may be described for the sake of argument as representing on the one hand caution and on the other hand enterprise. They may not be called Conservatives and Liberals, but the spirit animating the two movements will remain practically identical. Nevertheless the history of England during the next twenty years will be affected by the fact that leaders hitherto opposed like Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Bonar Law, Lord Curzon, Mr. Winston Churchill, and Mr. Austen Chamberlain have been brought into intimately friendly relationship. In the new parties which are bound to form themselves from

now onwards a good many of these men and their associates who have been found on different sides of the house will probably be linked together in a common effort. The realignment of personalities is now going on.

CHAPTER V

THE SOCIAL TEXTURE

THE story of the new England is not comprised by its politics, finance, and commerce. These are but partial manifestations, and in some degree ultimate manifestations. In the family life of England is hidden the secret of the drama, now only in its opening stages. Members of Parliament, city financiers, and editors of prominent publications flatter themselves unduly when they assume, as they sometimes do, that on them and their brother highbrows rests preponderatingly the task of moulding the future courses of the nation. They lend a hand here and there, but an accurate presentment would show these and other superior and powerful classes being themselves fashioned and guided by the entirely unphilosophic feelings of five millions of obscure families. It is all very well to say that people do not live by bread alone, but bread is a more satisfactory diet than ideas and ideals, however noble—a fact which, strangely enough, is often forgotten by Labour leaders as well as the Tory Bourbons, and the new plutocrats.

Politics has hitherto been a somewhat remote hobby for rich and poor alike—a cloudy, rather distant kind of

business, giving opportunity for a partiality derived from tradition, environment, taste, or temperament. Moreover, in an existence grey with the lack of sensations (most existences are like that) there was provided for discussion a topic in which one might find interest, an interest which would be quickened by an approaching election. Here, as in all countries, everyone pretended that politics were far more important than they really were. (The essentially important things were national character and national capacity.) Even now illusions have not entirely vanished from those actually or potentially in power, but there is a steady enlightenment going on. The justifiable contempt of Cabinet Ministers at the short-sighted resentment of the populace because there are not enough houses to live in will not prevent, if the resentment rises high enough, the contemptuous Ministers being thrown out of office neck and crop by those who are suffering inconvenience or hardship through the absence of adequate or comfortable shelter. This is but an example. It is a good one, though. The bare facts tell the story strikingly. A continually increasing population needs always more new houses, and before the war about a hundred thousand houses were put up each year. The war stopped all building. With arrears and fresh requirements there is now a demand for at least eight hundred thousand new houses. It does not pay capital to erect them, because owing to the present costliness of labour and material the rent to be obtained does not give a proper return on the money expended. So the

country goes on wanting houses it cannot get. The Government has made one or two efforts by partial subsidies and other means to help matters along, but they have been quite unsuccessful.

The result of the house famine is that there is grumbling in half the families in the land. Grumbling is a mild word for it in some cases. A family continues to grow, and instead of one bed there have to be two beds or even three beds in a room. Young John and Alice had arranged to be married at the end of the war and they simply cannot find a resting place, not even a couple of rooms, let alone a house. Corporal Brown was married two days before leaving for the front, and though he has been demobilized nearly a year his wife still lives with her people because no dwelling place is obtainable. The manager of a store in London gets a better situation in Brighton and has to travel fifty miles night and morning because there is not a habitation to be secured near his new work. A new and profitable factory in the Midlands is prevented from operating because there are no available dwelling places for work people within thirty miles. Meanwhile the newspapers conduct wordy campaigns in favour of quickly built wooden houses. Fatal objections arise with regard to the provision of wooden houses. The Government rather favours cement houses. For some reason or other cement houses are not forthcoming. And the inevitable result is that the increasing population continues to stack itself into buildings which do not expand.

It is in such matters as this housing problem that the theorists in power (of whatever brand) will find influences transcending all old time political tendencies. This, however, is only one of many new conditions which are turning the lives of English people upside down.

The city man ranging, let us say, from the middle-aged clerk in a big store, to the partner in a successful firm of solicitors, travels as usual by the 5.30 or 6 o'clock train to his suburban home as he did before the war, and at home after his evening meal he enjoys his pipe or his book, enjoys (or suffers) the domestic events of the day from his wife; has a word, sometimes a game with the children, and occasionally goes with one or all the family to the theatre or music-hall or the pictures. And yet there is a difference in the man and a difference in all connected with him in spite of the routine. How can it be otherwise? To have to stand up in his railway carriage two journeys out of three, pushed and jostled by other passengers, genially hustled by railway officials—these things produce a note differing from the placid harmony of occasional but comfortable crowding and what may be called the quiescence of old times. His money may have gone up far beyond the doubled cost of living, or may remain far below it. He is either better off or worse off. Not one person in a hundred remains in the same position as before the war. Perhaps if he is on the lucky side his children are getting many more toys, there is perhaps a fashionable development in the dress of his wife and grown-up

daughters, if he has any. He himself derives no more comfort from the extra money, not only because his own personal expenses have gone up, but because of the uncertainty of the future. Are his added investments safe? Are his old ones safe? He studiously reads the papers with regard to the possibility of a capital levy. He studies the occasional speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to see if there is any chance of a rise in the already very high income tax. The threat of the Labour movement which is increasing in its intensity every week affects him strongly. He feels he is walking on quicksands. England is not quite the solid place it used to be for him and the likes of him. And so it occurs that he goes to a farce or musical comedy twice as often as he did in the old days when he found a subtler joy touched with contentment and security and an assured outlook.

There is another side of the picture. The working man, say a skilled mechanic, while his double money obtains for him and his family only about the same recompense in goods, is nevertheless in an unsettled state of mind which is not entirely unhappy. It is not for him to survey the plight of the whole community. Why should he, when all his life in the past he has had nothing to depend on beyond a week or month's notice from his employer? The community was not so careful of him in those days. He and his family had to battle on in the face of the general conditions accepted by all. Now indeed there is a change. Labour is exalted. The ordinary working man is not so much concerned

as to whether a Labour government comes into being or not; what matters to him is that employers are nowhere really able to withstand demands for additional wages, additional remuneration for those who provide part of the workmanship in their enterprises. In dispute after dispute and strike after strike there have been, and continue to be, concessions which have been demanded by the men, and the exceptions here and there only throw into greater prominence the prevailing tendency. There is a new sense of freedom in the working classes, perhaps some of them do not look very far ahead—(who can blame them?)—but they carry with them an unexpressed satisfaction that they are no longer the bond slaves of circumstance. Anything may happen in this new world for them.

When one gets away from the money side of things there are other indications of a changing life which have their significance in the general vision of the future. Some of these changes are pleasant. One little joy, which is both healthy and satisfactory and which has been taken up by tens of thousands of townsmen and their families, is that of gardening. Go through the cities, especially London, and you will find great portions of the parks and commons and open spaces under the cultivation of the spade. Cabbages and sunflowers, carrots, parsley, and runner beans are to be found on what were once tennis courts or cricket grounds or ornamental gardens. In the pressure for food during the war local authorities put quantities of this ground under cultivation and allotted it out

at a nominal rent to the inhabitants of the district. In the course of a few months hundreds of acres, possibly thousands of acres, were producing fresh vegetables, to the great relief of families who had been reduced to rations, and with a continual happiness to town dwellers who saw food growing beneath their eyes as a result of their own labour. Great towns of England, like those of every other country, are continually recruited from the young men of the countryside who settle down to rear families, and who, while their life and work goes on amid the gas-lighted streets, treasure deep within them the memory of those boyhood days when they used to be at the plough tail, used to be at work with the digging fork or with the hoe. Conceive the great joy with which they seized upon this new wartime occupation. Moreover, they inoculated with their enthusiasm the born townsmen. With a departure of the war there has been no departure of these allotment gardens; they are still cultivated, still bringing forth their crops of vegetables. As the evenings get lighter men can be seen sprinkled over the acres in any particular park or common putting in an hour or two, digging or sowing or weeding. Saturday afternoon is a great time for these amateur gardeners. Children come out then and help pull up the weeds, or to carry home the lettuces or cucumbers or the cabbages. Sunday morning finds many of the allotments under earnest effort by men young, old, and middle-aged working with their coats off. Love of the land is a passion with Englishmen and no more

striking demonstration can be found than in these cultivated parks and commons. There is some talk of abolishing the allotment gardens, but a great cry has gone up against it. A new hobby and a new usefulness has been discovered. I think it will persist.

One of the sure evidences of taste and feeling in a country is to be found in the written word whether it be in newspapers or in books. In a very real sense the newspapers in England reflect public opinion because, owing to the comparatively small size of the country, the London publications cover practically all districts, and are a national medium of expression. A radius of less than two hundred miles is the limit for effective morning newspaper delivery, owing to the fact that beyond this distance the time occupied in transmission by train makes a paper too late for sales. A morning newspaper with a radius of two hundred miles from London covers a big part of England and Wales, and when, as is the case with some of the principal morning papers, they are printed simultaneously in Manchester it means that nearly the whole of the British Isles is covered by newspapers produced in the capital. This helps to produce a close association between all parts of the country and the heart of affairs in London, and has a decided advantage for national purposes. Incidentally it accounts for the very large circulation of many of the English newspapers. There are three journals which each sell round about a million copies a day, and several others the sale of which ranges between half a million and a

million. This does not mean that some of the local publications have not great influence in their localities, and indeed in one or two instances some effect on general opinion. For example, the *Manchester Guardian* is probably the most direct and effective exponent of what may be called sane Liberalism in the British Isles. But at the same time it is the London papers which are the big motive power in reproducing and in some cases guiding public opinion. Owing to the price of paper which still continues high, the size of papers remains less than it was before the war, and there is necessary an intensification of that economy in words which in the last generation has become the standard of English publications. It makes the papers less imposing physically; it does not harm their contents, which in fashion and in spirit are not very different from what they used to be. True, more pictures are in use, and true also, there is a tendency to emphasize the lighter and more interesting sides of life in distinction from the heavily instructive, but generally there is no departure from the canons which have given English newspapers a special place in the world of letters. How special is their position can be understood only by a comparison with newspapers produced in the same language, namely, those of America. Directness and brevity in form, a tendency against exaggerated sensation in fact or theory, well-informed and scrupulously moderate comment on the affairs of the nations—these are the distinguishing marks of the principal London papers. In New York one finds greater

variety, a devotion to the uncommon, and an immensely greater bulk of words. American leading articles are in the prominent journals brilliantly written—though a little longer than we like them in England. The news is to an English eye given at voluminous length, the matter of a story being surrounded, not to say overwhelmed, with words, whereas in England it is stripped down to the bare bones of fact. The latter is more than ever the case now with paper at an abnormally high figure.

As a result of the intermingling of parties, the newspapers are not nearly so hidebound in their special political views, and oldtime Conservative journals strongly support Mr. Lloyd George, while the Northcliffe papers not only press Home Rule, but take a hand on behalf of Labour, and in the course of a recent dispute provided a thousand pounds a week in aid of the strikers. We live indeed in a strange new world.

One feature of newspaper life in England which has been strengthened and extended as a result of the war is the institution known as the Association of Newspaper Proprietors, who meet in London every week for discussion and decision not only of matters of technique, but also of affairs concerning the welfare of the country. During the war the Association was of vast assistance to the Government, and although it is practically unknown to the public at large it continues to take an active part in vital doings. It is in effect a little parliament of experienced practical men of affairs with differing views, who between them hammer out

common decisions where there is a truly national point at issue.

The people of England are reading books again now that the war is over. (While the war was on, books were trashy and unreal in the constant presence of a day by day epic.) For a period after the Armistice war books were in great demand, but there has been, as is only natural, a gradual turning away to other themes. The public are now thoroughly tired of war adventure books, indeed are tired of war associations altogether, and are reading fiction with avidity. Incidentally the more responsible people are stirred by books on current topics, such as that recently written by Mr. Keynes, one of the temporary British representatives of the Treasury at the Peace Conference, who, under the title of "The Economic Consequences of the Peace," has written a slashing attack not only on the conclusions that the Allies arrived at, but also on some of the principal persons concerned in the making of those provisions. People generally, however, are seeking a relief from war in romance and tales of travel and tales of money-making, although the latter must necessarily be mixed up with love.

Manners have not been extinguished in England by the growth of democracy, and kindliness of demeanour and graciousness of words are still sought for as a mark of superiority by those who have graduated through harsher experiences than those provided by Oxford and Cambridge. Brusqueness is regarded as part of ignorance. This may lead to insincerities here and there

but as a national trait it is a signal of civilization. Jack is as good as his master, but he does not feel it necessary to assert his independence in tone and manner; and Ministers of State when writing to private citizens invariably subscribe themselves "your obedient servant." Labour leaders in the House of Commons are punctilious in their courtesies, even though some of them may be steering for revolution. It is pleasurable to smooth the path in the smaller things of life, and better a measure of surface politeness than a reversion to the snarl of the jungle. There is a minority even in England who think that snarl means openness, courage, independence. As often as not it means cunning as well as a stupid self-sufficiency.

What there is of servility is a remnant of economic dependence. The latter is fast disappearing under the new dispensation of events, although a respect for personal attainments on the one hand and personal position on the other continues, but no more than it does in other countries new or old—France and America for example. Snobbery, however, is still rampant in one class, namely, that of the bureaucrats. The permanent officials, especially the subordinate ones, are the lords of creation to their little circles, imagine they are necessary for the government of England, and protected by ramparts of red tape are in no danger of having their real capacity tested. Entry to the Foreign Office and some of the other departments is still facilitated by aristocratic connections. How many of the staff of these offices could earn five pounds a week on their

merits in the competitive and unsheltered world is a matter for amused speculation, which, if brought to the notice of those concerned, would meet with a blank stare. There is an assumption among them that they are a specially aloof class blessed by Heaven. Unfortunately some of these bumptious incapables are occasionally sent to other countries, attached to missions, legations, consulates, and they give, alas, an impression to foreigners of what is regarded as the average Englishman. The Americans are immensely ahead of us in this respect. What a treat it is to meet a capable and courteous under-secretary in the service of the United States after contact with some of our own Government officials!

A decoration established during the war, the Order of the British Empire, has been widely bestowed among our smaller bureaucratic functionaries, temporary and permanent. The "O. B. E." has become a joke, owing to its general diffusion. Some outsiders have also received it, and they meet in their walks abroad many ungratifying allusions. "Have you heard about Brown?" said one clubman to another. "No, what's happened to him?" "Why, he's got an 'O. B. E.'" "Brown got an 'O. B. E.' You don't mean it." There was a moment's reflection, and then the clinching comment, "Well, serves him right."

We have no really great writers now if we except Mr. Thomas Hardy, who is of advanced age and who has practically given up prose composition. There are, of course, accomplished writers like Mr. H. G. Wells

and Mr. Arnold Bennett—faithful expositors who possess some imagination. Their books are eagerly read by tens of thousands, and their work is certainly stimulating and healthy. Neither of them, however, can be regarded as great literary artists. The delicate allusiveness which we find in the masters, even those who rouse one with the power of a trumpet, is not now known in any noteworthy measure. To those who remember Scott and Dickens and Mark Twain, with their all-pervading strength and genius the efforts of English writers of the present day are puny indeed. There is silence from our three great artists, Hardy, Kipling, and Barrie—except that the latter has done some work for the stage, his little one-act play "The Old Lady Shows Her Medals" being a true and poignant presentation. Where are the soul-moving books, plays, and pictures? The war seems to have numbed us. It is probably but a passing phase. The country is in labour. There may presently come to us as a people tragedy or triumph or a mingling of both. There can hardly fail to be born with the epoch its chroniclers.

CHAPTER VI

THE WOMEN

WHATEVER the dangers, internal or external, by which a country may be threatened, there is one all-pervading influence unceasingly operating for good or evil. The women of a nation have a good deal to do with settling its destiny—a fact which has no relation whatever to the possession of the vote. There is probably no country on earth where women have so much influence over their men folk as in England, a statement which is likely to cause surprise among some observers abroad who are apt to regard English women as too placid or too angular, often colourless, and, now and again, innocently stupid. They are not so graceful as the French, it is urged, nor so companionable as the Americans. Indeed, in America there is a widespread idea that the English woman is more or less of a slave in her home, and is too much the meek and subservient wife. These suggestions, put bluntly to stay-at-home English people, produce a shock no less on the women than on the men. They do not produce a shock but a smile on those who have met women of other nationalities. The women of every country have special qualities and special attractions

of their own. To English people English women remain the best in the world for quite a variety of reasons.

It is the instinct for family life which makes the English woman so powerful. And for that very reason the women of England are both a problem and a potentiality at the present time. Before the war there were more women than men, and now there are a million. There were not husbands enough to go round before, and what is going to happen now? Where is the increase of the population to come from? What about the social difficulties which arise from such a surplusage of women? Those are two of the big questions, and only time can provide a complete and accurate answer to them.

A million old maids is a serious thing for a country to contemplate even when one subtracts those who become benevolent and comfort-giving maiden aunts. A good many of them will be able to earn their own living, and some of the most alert will probably emigrate and find husbands abroad. But there still remain hundreds of thousands who will not have a chance of getting a life mate or of producing the children which are necessary to the nation. It is said by some that women have improved during the war, but I see no evidence of it. Inherent qualities were brought out but they were there all the time, and will continue whether we have war or peace. On the other hand, with the best part of a million of our youngest, most active and bravest men wiped out, the husbands for years to come will more frequently be of the older type possessing less of the

vital qualities of young and courageous manhood. One might think that this would lead to a deterioration in coming generations. Possibly it may have some effect. It is improbable that the effect will be lasting or widespread, and for this reason: that the qualities, good or bad, of our race are in the women, and from the women to their children there will go the springs of initiative, of endurance—or whatever makes for good or bad in our particular brand of human beings.

The million extra women, however, provide a consideration which will have to be taken into account during the coming ten years or so. Some of them will be absorbed in the civilian work they have taken up during the war, and in which they will continue. But the insistent demand deep within the real woman is to become the wife of the man she loves, and to become the mother of his children. However much we may seek to avoid making an announcement of the fact, nature is continually sounding an imperious call. A bold speculator in one of our journals has made a hazardous guess that there will be a rearrangement of our marriage laws, although she delicately refrains from stating whether the implication is that a man should be allowed two wives instead of one. We can dismiss the proposition. Another movement which has a practical bearing is that designed to reform the existing laws of divorce—to make it easier for couples to secure release from each other when it is obvious that their continued conjunction is opposed to the laws of nature and commonsense. Now under the law divorce depends solely on whether

a woman has been guilty of infidelity or whether a man has been guilty of infidelity added to desertion or cruelty. This shuts out cases where disease, criminality, insanity—to mention but three points—make the continuation of legal marriage but a tragic absurdity. The cheapening of the present expensive divorce proceedings is part of the proposed reform. It may be asked whether this will not release as many women as men, but, facing facts as we find them, the natural result will be that the liberated men will be more available for parenthood in new marriages than the liberated women, and the result will be that more divorced men than divorced women will be re-married. Divorce reform therefore may produce some amelioration in the disparity, but the effect, if effect there is, will not be anything like sufficient to make up the balance. Probably the sociologist will suggest that some amount of immorality is bound to march with the new conditions. Well, there may be some tendency in that direction. I do not think it will be sufficiently marked to make it worth recording as part of our post-war history. English women have their defects when compared to the sex in other countries, but it cannot be put against them that they have a leaning to what may be called anti-social liberty. All the evidence goes towards demonstrating that, highly developed racially, they strain not towards immorality but away from it. With this has to be set the consideration that they carry with them a passion for home life, a home life which implies children. The family tie in England has an influence at least as strong as the

Mosaic code and the Sermon on the Mount. In this resides much of the opposition to divorce reform, and with it are associated the delays and formalities—not very serious ones—to the marriage ceremony. Abrogate these things, put marriage within reach of a twelve hours' impulse, make easy the breaking of the tie, and, it is argued, you are retracing the steps of civilization, you are making family life less permanent in its foundation, and the whole institution of conjunction between men and women less sacred. There may be some modifications but the impulse behind these thoughts will remain. That impulse makes for happiness, whatever the cynics say.

A big proportion of women now living must be left without husbands, but many will play noble parts, finding their solace for the denial of nature's great gift of children in softening and self-sacrificing work. Time, of course, will take away the present abnormal difference between the numbers of the sexes. It is true we are entering into a period of old maids. They may well prove one of the best elements during an insurgent and a troubled period.

The changes in women's fashions are so swift, are based on such nebulous causes, are continued for such irreconcilable reasons that clumsy conservative man is not able to do more than to make a note of any passing phase. I wonder if it was the necessity for work during the war that has caused women in this country and in others, to emphasize the short skirt. It is not only far more healthful and easy, but just as becoming as the

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long dresses of other days. The dresses of the girl conductors on the omnibuses used to be almost up to their knees. The dresses of women in general are a little bit longer than this, but they still display to their advantage or disadvantage the ankles of young and old. It is an innovation of the age that stockings are now seen. (Conceive what would have been the havoc to our grandmothers' feelings in their younger days!) Visible stockings make for trimness in both shoes and hose. The neat light footwear of English women is one of their characteristics. In other countries the pointed toe, the variety of colouring, the decoration and high laced effect disturb the symmetry of the foot and take away ornament instead of adding to it. For nearly all weathers the English woman wears a light cut shoe showing her ankle with an occasional broad lace the only elaboration. There is no affectation of broad toes, and just as much an aversion to narrow toes. The fiction that the foot is long and thin, reaching an attenuated point, has been dismissed in the realization that the close fitting comfortable thin shoe, soft in texture and brightly polished is both more attractive and more comfortable.

Stockings are getting back to a silky texture, though up to months after the war there was a prevalence of a khaki-coloured hose which was disturbing to the general symphony. Thank goodness, they have gone now, and we have something more harmonious, more in consonance with the clean, simple graciousness of the typical English attire.

The blouse and skirt as the ordinary indoor dress for rich and poor is still in fashion. Long may it continue. A light coloured silken blouse, a skirt darker in colour and warmer in texture, provides the main garb for millions of our women. The skirt is not tight as were some of those not many years ago, but hangs in loose folds reaching to a few inches above the ankle. They give perfect freedom in walking and for most kinds of exercise. Sensible waists are the fashion, indeed fashion is now ordaining comfort as part of beauty. There is a rage among younger girls for knitted woollen jumpers fitting close to the body and reaching to the hips, adding grace to the slender, though for those who are more robust in development they perhaps give an emphasis which is not altogether on the side of charm.

Neat headwear is the order of the day, and the huge wide brims and feather ornamentations have gone by the board. Felt, velour and straw in plain, almost severe style, crown the well-dressed women of to-day. The one-piece frock for out-of-doors wear in the city in the summer, and the coat and skirt of tweed in the winter and serge in the spring, complete the catalogue. The dress of women in England on the whole is marked by simplicity. There are some people who would be extravagant in any style, and no restrictions of fashion would restrain their propensity for elaboration. They are the exceptions.

I have just been reading complaints of a country girl as to her remoteness from the interests of life. Distance from a railway station, absence of congenial neighbours,

joined to the fact of a very small income, make her discontented. There are no doubt a good many like her. Yet they are but a fraction and are certainly not typical. In general England is a good country for young womanhood. It is so small a place, compared with other countries, that opportunities are at hand in most cases, and where they are not they can be made.

The average English girl does not struggle to get into the world of affairs, is not peevishly anxious to climb into literary circles or thrust herself into political activities, because she is born and brought up in a community so compact and intensified that interests are thrust upon her, and unless as sometimes happens she has the spirit of an amiable animal and nothing else, she cannot fail to be identified with trends of thought, habit, and action among the community. A country girl, the daughter of a parson perchance, knows her father's activity in political affairs, imbibes some of his prejudices, gets a reflection from his papers and magazines, and in her acquaintanceships in the village learns what the working people are thinking and talking about, and during her occasional week-ends in the country town a few miles away she can generally find a play, a musical comedy, or a lecture derived not so long since from London. Moreover, the English country girl has special joys in her out-door life, her golf, her tennis, for example —for which she can nearly always find agreeable companions. Country life in England as elsewhere is monotonous when lonely. It is not often lonely in England. At its best it provides a glow, a happiness,

and a fullness which are unequalled anywhere in the world. The war has not altered things much in this direction.

It is hard to be marooned in England, for a four hours' railway journey from London covers a great part of the country, and a visit to the capital is a stimulation occasionally within the reach of nearly everyone.

What about the young woman who lives in London? One may ignore the well-to-do whose money opens all the gates of amusement or interest. A young woman earning her own living, say in an office as secretary to some business man, small as may be her material means, has the riches of the ages before her if she likes to utilize any part of them. She can visit Parliament if she desires. Museums, picture galleries, which draw people from all parts of the earth are within reach of a two-penny omnibus ride. There is profusion and the widest variety of musical entertainment. There are scores of organizations devoted to various activities, artistic, social, utilitarian, philanthropic, any one of which is open to her. London, moreover, is a great educational centre in which a girl may find cheap and ready opportunities for perfecting herself in almost any branch of study. All this is rather highbrow. Well, there are sports galore, and as the English girl enjoys activity rather than passive entertainment, the public and private dances, the hockey field, the tennis courts, the swimming baths and the gymnasiums, the Thames at Richmond with its boats and punts, and the golf courses, are more popular perhaps than the picture

galleries and the lecture halls. And London is as rich in interest for the younger generation as ever it was.

The English woman has not been really altered by the war, although sorrow, suspense, peril, with the accentuation of household worries have drawn upon the reserves of her spirit, have deepened and broadened her. Her soft vitality is finding a special scope. When we say there is something essentially practical about the English woman we mean that she gets down to fundamentals. In her heart she knows that much of the so-called absorbing activity of the male sex, their politics for example, are just playthings, hobbies. The men pretend to be carried away by ideals, by great projects, by party enthusiasms, and she pretends to share in them, at least so far as to make her sympathetically useful. She is proud of the husband who can make money, and money is not unacceptable to the most highminded, whether man or woman. But it is the fact of her men folk's energy and devotion in their various activities that makes the men folk of primary value to her. She does not always know this. That is one thing that makes her lovable. Conceive the virile, well-balanced human man falling in love with a spinster of striking intellect whose life is given to the furthering of what are called great causes. The thing is ridiculous. We have a sprinkling of women intellectuals, but they are by no means representative of the women of England.

The ordinary young English woman is soft-spoken as well as quietly dressed. Rarely does she deserve

the adjective "brilliant," yet the best of them have not only a receptivity but a latent sparkle which only requires the proper medium to become apparent. They do not make a call on humour as does the educated Englishman, and thus it is levelled against them that they have none or little of that exquisite sense. The wife or sister or sweetheart replies that all grown-up males are like children, have to be indulged in most things, but that it is impossible at all times to descend to their infantile emotions. Some people will laugh their heads off to see a fly crawling down a wall. Is a person to be criticized because she sees nothing to laugh at in that particular exercise?

I come back to the fact that deep down in every typical English woman's heart is the love for home and family; all the rest of life is merely trimmings. It may safely be hazarded that the late Mrs. Gladstone, a cultured as well as a charming woman, thought a good deal more of the personal welfare of Mr. Gladstone, of his clothes, his breakfast, his sleep, than she did of those political principles which made her husband world famous. The almost ideal happiness of her family circle is the answer to those lesser people who might suggest that she ought to have been thinking of higher things. Mrs. Gladstone is perhaps the best example of the best kind of English women, but the type persists in its various shades due to environment or temperament. The spirit of the women of England is making not merely for stability but for that imponderable thing called happiness. The climax of drama in

political affairs is steadily drawing nearer. Forebodings may well go hand in hand with courage in regard to it. If there is one influence more than another which will draw the poison from violent threatenings, which will lead us away from chaos and tragedy, it is the sweet reasonableness of our women. Their politics of whatever brand do not go very deep, and the unexpected removal of veneer is sometimes quite startling. I wipe out the harsh theorists because in them the deeper springs are dry, although they know it not. They are but a handful. I have known a flaming young Socialist woman orator who was seized by doubts, after she had come in contact with a manly young squire, traditionally conservative, although he did not know a tithe of the political facts which were within her grasp. I love that story of Mr. Lloyd George in the days of his Budget, when the propertied classes regarded him as the brother of Satan. As Chancellor of the Exchequer he had to go to a fashionable drawing-room one afternoon. Those were the times when the breath of aristocrats used to come fast, and their colour rise at the mere mention of the doings of this radical revolutionary, when it was the fashion to believe that his morals and manners were hardly to be mentioned in decent society. Mr. Lloyd George sat for half an hour in that fashionable drawing-room. The Duchess spoke about him afterwards to a friend. She was taken from her moorings. "Do you know," she said, "that he is quite a nice man?"

I find abroad some inclination to believe that there

has been a change in feminine habits in this country, a change for the worse or better according to one's personal point of view. A common delusion is that all the women of England are now smoking, that women smokers may be seen in all the restaurants, and that a large part of the smoking compartments on the trains are given up to them, that it is the fashion now after tea or after dinner in the majority of homes for the women to have their cigarettes just like the men do. The defect in this story is that it is not true. Visitors from abroad naturally do not see much of homelife when they are in England, and have a good many of their meals at the smart restaurants or the hotels, and it is in these places that you see a woman here and there smoking a cigarette. There are young women, and especially young unmarried women, who surreptitiously smoke a cigarette in their own room. It gives them a sense of freedom. A habit started from youthful bravado or affectation has become a sign of power. These young women will argue loquaciously as to the right of the women to smoke as well as men, showing that its deleterious influence is no more on them than on the male sex. But it is a curious fact that the most sincere and vivacious of these smoking advocates will flinch as from a physical shock when it is suggested that they should smoke the more healthful pipe, a big wooden pipe for preference—since all doctors will bear witness that pipe smoking is infinitely less harmful than cigarette smoking. No, no, it must be something which has the appearance of delicacy, and, to their

view, of charm. When smoking really takes hold of the women of England large cigars and wooden pipes will be produced from my lady's chatelaine in the smoking compartment of the train, and in the seclusion of the study. Until that consummation is reached we may dismiss as a passing spasm on the part of a few the use of tobacco by the women of England. The young matron has not yet learned to amuse her offspring by blowing smoke-rings from her pipe. In the vast preponderance of the homes of England the fact that a woman smokes is still received with something of a shock. One must not draw inferences as to the habits of people from the conduct of that fragment which attends the West End restaurants.

CHAPTER VII

THE COUNTRY'S MONEY

ENGLAND is deep in a big task of bookkeeping. How do the accounts stand after the expensive incursion into war? What do we owe? What have we to pay our debts with? Are we a losing business now? If so, what are the chances of our paying our way in the future? These and many other questions are receiving progressive answers not from the mouth of this statesman or of that, but from the march of facts. I write this in the early days of 1920, and though we are still in the welter of calculation, reconstruction, estimate, with human factors intruding themselves disconcertingly on the ledger pages, yet there are some recognizable signals on which accountants may begin to form a judgment.

England is rapidly progressing towards paying her way. There is no need now to borrow money as during the war and for a period after the war. Of so much we are assured. The situation may be either strengthened or weakened in the coming months by two influences. One is the intensive demand on a war-shattered world for the goods and services which England above all other nations is in a position to supply. The other is the impulse for new political conditions in England

which in its results may retard, may conceivably stop, the great industrial profit-making machine which is now getting into working order again. The material consequences of the war and the emotions following the war, each of them distinct and dramatic, may come to a clash. Later I purpose to tell the story of Labour's insurgence in England, and I mention it here only because it is impossible to divorce any of the country's principal operations from the courses which Labour may or may not follow.

The United Kingdom, with between forty and fifty million inhabitants, prior to 1914 produced only about fifty per cent. of the food for the population, the other fifty per cent. being imported. At the present time the proportion of imported food is slightly less, owing to the fact that nearly one and a half million acres previously pastoral or waste have been under cultivation during the war. It will be seen therefore that in the new circumstances England, in order to provide itself with food, to say nothing of other necessary products, has to pay foreign countries for a great part of its sustenance. Among the other imports for which it has to pay the foreigner are raw materials which it turns into manufactured goods and distributes over the world, and on which it makes a profit. From England's own products such as iron and steel, we make a great quantity of commodities which are also sold to foreign customers, and on which a profit is also made. Additional revenue comes to the country owing to the fact that we have a great mercantile

marine which carries not only our own goods, but the goods of other nations on all the oceans. Still a further source of income is the interest on foreign investments, money placed in various undertakings conducted in various parts of the globe. Before the war Britain was paying her way in substantial fashion. Not only were good profits being made by large sections of the population, but for years past there had been progressive amelioration in the lot of the poorer people, old age pensions for men and women of seventy and upwards, increases of remuneration to badly paid industrial workers, and a general uplifting of conditions for the submerged tenth. This does not mean that a great deal of poverty did not exist; there was a fluctuating amount of unemployment and some privation. These conditions, however, were more and more taking up the attention of statesmen of all parties.

For national services of various kinds the country was raising £200,000,000, about a billion dollars, a year, which provided for the Army, the Navy, the civil services and incidental commitments of the Government, and in addition a certain sum paid off the national debt—incurred in previous generations, amounting to about £600,000,000, or three billion dollars. In the future instead of our normal national services costing us £200,000,000 a year, they will—probably owing to the increased price of everything, to the burden of war pensions, to the necessity for expenditure in reconstruction—cost us about double, namely, £400,000,000. Our national debt has increased from

£600,000,000 to £8,000,000,000,—or from 3 billion to 40 billion dollars—and the interest on this will amount to between £300,000,000 and £400,000,000, say £350,-000,000. Thus the country will have to raise as its normal expenditure in the future, not £200,000,000 but £750,000,000. Part of the present difficulty of England is explained by the fact that a great proportion of the factories from which she derived her livelihood had to be turned to the production of war material in place of their usual employments; making shells which were to be blown to pieces on the fields of France in the place of making machinery at a fair profit obviously has a bad effect on the balance sheet. Factories, industries, in some cases almost entire cities were turned over from their multifarious productive operations to the manufacturing of munitions of war. Between four and five thousand factories, some of them cities in themselves, were under the control of the Government for war purposes. All of them or nearly all of them have to be retransformed for industrial work once more. That is going to be a long job—although it is already well in hand. The transformation of these places from peace to war activities had an effect which may be judged from the fact that our exports from the factories in 1913 amounted to over £500,000,000. These factories being turned into places for making war material made individual profits, but they were profits secured from loans raised by the British Government, which British posterity will have to pay. Previously the factories had been making

goods which the world wanted and paid for in money or in kind. These goods in themselves helped to reproduce further goods or wealth, from which Britain felt some reaction in constantly increasing prosperity.

Many financial difficulties have piled themselves on England as a result of the war. They can be summarized as follows:

(1) Disorganization of industries in Britain which previously produced a large part of the national revenue.

(2) Disorganization of industries in allied countries, countries which were previously customers of Britain for a variety of goods, and who in the new circumstances cannot give money or goods to the same extent as before in recompense.

(3) Enormous increase in the cost of all commodities in Britain owing to the complicated causes which produce changes in the value of money.

(4) A depreciation of the value of the pound in America which is at present the actual or potential principal storehouse of supplies of raw material.

Two main considerations emerge from these general facts, one is that treble the amount of taxes, direct or indirect, will in future have to be imposed in order to meet the interest on the war debt and the increased cost of maintenance of the country; the other is that owing to the disintegration of the world during the war there are special difficulties in getting back into a normal state of affairs, to say nothing of income mounting up anywhere near the point which is necessary for real prosperity. Hard pressed as Britain is, she is neverthe-

less better off than the other European countries, who are consequently looking to her for help. In the first half of 1919 we sold goods and gave services to Europe to the extent of something like £200,000,000 above what those countries were able to pay us, and though there are possibly eventual considerations to be set off against this, the fact remains that in 1919 we were selling goods and services to the Continent at the rate of £400,000,000 a year which could not be paid for to England in English money. At the same time the British were buying from the United States and other countries, but particularly from the United States, vast quantities of goods which it was impossible to pay for. In the first six months America supplied England with £250,000,000 worth of goods, mainly food and raw materials, and we sold back to America in that time only about £10,000,000 worth of British goods, and £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 worth of foreign and Colonial goods. All this means that America must be lending us money or extending credit which comes to the same thing.

In the broad sense Britain sells to the world at large and buys from America, and unless the world at large pays her she cannot pay America. She has to give credit to her customers in Europe and to ask credit from America, and that is how it is that the American dollar has gone up in value as compared with the English pound, and that the French franc and Italian lire have gone down in comparison with the English pound. Credit from America on reasonable terms thus means

credit for the whole of the civilized world. An illustration of how England makes her living (taken from pre-war times) is in relation to the textile industries. In 1912 the imports of cotton were worth £11,500,000, the exports of cotton were £120,830,000. The total exports the year before the war were nearly £635,000,000. A good deal of this, it is obvious, is profit on our working up of raw materials. The fact that our imports for the same year amounted to nearly £769,000,000 is accounted for by reason of our buying at least half our food from abroad. We have not only our profit on manufactures as income, but also, as I mentioned above, a large sum as the interest on investments abroad, and also about £400,000,000 paid to us for the use of our ships for carrying goods to various nations. When all these things and many others are put into the balance they come to this, that England over a year after the war, burdened with a debt of £8,000,000,000 is, thanks to her investments abroad, her shipping trade, and her industries which although much war-damaged are improving, in a sound condition.

It is true that every man and woman in the country is the poorer by reason of the war, money being worth much less. A hard fight is in front of her, but the condition of the world indicates opportunities not merely for the resuscitation of old time prosperity, but a vast increase. Meanwhile immediate difficulties confront the country, as for instance the raising from £700,000,000 to £800,000,000 revenue every year for the national services in place of the £200,000,000 required before the war.

While, of course, it was necessary to raise large loans to carry on the war, it was the endeavour of the British to pay as much as was humanly possible of the cost out of current income, and thus to relieve as far as might be the charge on posterity. Specially high taxes were imposed, including 80 per cent. on the excess profits made by those in occupations benefiting by the war. In 1913–14 the total income tax was about £47,000,000. In the year 1918–19 the total was raised from £47,000,000 to £293,000,000. The excess profits tax has been reduced to forty per cent., and may come down still lower. It is certain, however, that millions additional to the pre-war rates will be raised by taxation. The following is an outline of the income tax charges in force during 1919:

Income, earned or unearned, not exceeding £130, exempt; exceeding £130, but not exceeding £400, an abatement of £120; exceeding £400, but not exceeding £600, abatement of £100; exceeding £600, but not exceeding £700, abatement of £70.

Rate on "earned" income, where total earned and unearned income

	s.	d.	
did not exceed £500	2.	3	in the £.
Exceeded £500 and did not exceed £1,000	3.	0	"
" £1,000 " " " " £1,500	3.	9	"
" £1,500 " " " " £2,000	4.	6	"
" £2,000 " " " " £2,500	5.	3	"
" £2,500	6.	0	"

Rate on "unearned" income, where total earned and unearned income

	s.	d.	
did not exceed £500	3.	0	in the £.
Exceeded £500 and did not exceed £1,000	3.	9	"
" £1,000 " " " " £1,500	4.	6	"
" £1,500 " " " " £2,000	5.	3	"
" £2,000	6.	0	"

There is also the super-tax. The limit of super-tax exemption is £2,500, and the rates of super-tax payable under the graduated scales were up to a maximum of 4/6d in the £. The effect of super-tax was as follows:

Rates for incomes exceeding £2,500 chargeable:

		s. d.
With regard to first £3,000 of income	the first £2,000	Nil.
	" next £500	1. 0
	" " £500	1. 6
	On fourth £1,000 (£3,000 to £4,000)	2. 0
	" fifth " (£4,000 to £5,000)	2. 6
	" sixth " (£5,000 to £6,000)	3. 0
	" seventh " (£6,000 to £7,000)	3. 6
	" eighth " (£7,000 to £8,000)	3. 6
	" ninth " (£8,000 to £9,000)	4. 0
	" tenth " (£9,000 to £10,000)	4. 0
	" remainder (above £10,000)	4. 6

Examples of the effect of income-tax and super-tax on large incomes are as follow:

(Income Tax, 6/–. Super-Tax Maximum 4/6d.)

Income.	Income Tax.	Super-Tax.	Income Tax and Super-Tax.
£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
25,000	7,500	4,562. 10. 0	12,062. 10. 0
30,000	9,000	5,687. 10. 0	14,687. 10. 0
40,000	12,000	7,937. 10. 0	19,937. 10. 0
50,000	15,000	10,187. 10. 0	25,187. 10. 0
100,000	30,000	21,437. 10. 0	51,437. 10. 0
150,000	45,000	32,687. 10. 0	77,608. 17. 0

All these facts and figures go to show that England must in figurative language make two blades of grass grow where one did before; must by invention lessen labour; must use the great instruments she possesses in manufacturing to double or treble her output.

The expenditure estimated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the year ending in March, 1920, was

£1,642,295,000, and the revenue £1,168,650,000. This means a deficit on the year of £473,645,000. The following is a list of expenditures:

National Debt Services	£345,000,000
Payments to Local Taxation Account	9,763,000
Land Settlement	5,000,000
Other Consolidated Fund Services	1,832,000
Army	405,000,000
Navy	160,000,000
Air Force	57,500,000
Civil Services (including War Pensions)	602,000,000
Revenue Department	56,200,000
Total expenditure	£1,642,295,000

The total National Debt is now estimated at £8,075,000,000. The debt due to the American Government accounts for approximately £842,000,000 of this total. Against the £8,075,000,000 it is estimated that there will be the following war assets:

Obligations of Allies	£1,740,000,000
Obligations of Dominions	200,000,000
Outstanding obligation of India in respect of British War Loan	21,000,000
Vote of credit and other war assets, namely, surplus stores, ships, stocks of commodities, etc., repayable advances (as estimated by the Departments concerned)	425,000,000
Arrears of excess profits duty	240,000,000
Total	£2,626,000,000

There will probably be modifications in detail, possibly here and there in bulk, with regard to some of these figures in the Budget for 1920. At the same time the general perspective will not alter.

Sir Robert Kindersley, a director of the Bank of England and a financier in the confidence of the Gov-

ernment, has recently made some statements which are illuminating. Here is a part of what he says:

The one fundamental fact which outweighs all others in its importance is that we are consuming more than we are producing, or, to be more exact, that we are demanding and receiving from other nations goods and services in excess of the goods and services which we are rendering to them. What are the causes which are contributing to a state of affairs so degrading both to the nation and to the individual? To answer this question it is necessary firstly, to examine our situation before the war.

Owing to the energy, the spirit of adventure, and the enterprise of our people, an immense portion of the world was being developed by Britons and on British capital. The profits on these enterprises, as well as the payment for our banking, shipping, and other services rendered to the world, came to us in the shape of produce of every kind. Furthermore, we had lent many millions to foreign and Colonial Governments and municipalities for the general development of their countries, the interest on these loans being again paid to us in the shape of goods. But what was the effect of this universal toll which we were annually levying on the world? It was to obscure the fact that, though we were a great industrial nation and had an immense asset in our coal, the actual riches of the country itself were, on the whole, not great, and that our strength lay in our power of production and fabrication. Take our cotton industry. Do we stop to think what a remarkable fact it is that not one ounce of cotton is grown in this country? This is only one example.

By the combination of the industry and enterprise of the individual at home and the payment for services rendered to, and investments held in, other countries, we have in the past not only been able to pay for our vast imports, but have

had a surplus of capital each year to lend abroad. But during the war we have been compelled to part with an enormous number of these investments in various parts of the world, probably at least £1,000,000,000, while we have incurred debts to America and other countries amounting to about £1,300,000,000. If we take an average of five per cent. interest on these two items it amounts to £115,000,000, and we are therefore annually to this extent more dependent upon our power of production than before the war. If we want things from abroad, we can no longer pay for them to the same extent out of the profits of foreign companies which we own, or interest on money lent abroad—in other words, out of the proceeds of the labour of the nationals of other countries—but we must pay for them by labouring ourselves to produce the goods required in exchange by the seller abroad from whom we purchase.

Many people of this country are receiving wages and earning profits in excess of the value of the services which they are rendering. The consequence is that their purchasing power—or power of consumption—is increasing, while their productive capacity, or rather their willingness to produce, has diminished for the time being. We can no longer count on the same amount of labour from foreign nationals to produce the things we want. We are at the same time producing less ourselves, and we are consuming more.

One thing is absolutely certain, that the nationals of foreign countries are not going to work for us in order to produce for us more than they owe us, unless we work for them to produce those things which they require.

Sir Robert Kindersley is concerned to warn his countrymen of dangers which are plain to him and other experts. He urges economy and hard work not merely as aids to profit, but as our only safeguard against disaster. Our financial framework, it is apparent, with

many elements of strength, needs careful constructive work. Its buttress is our commerce. Commerce and a good many other things depend on "Labour," and "Labour" comprises a good deal more than half the people of the country. The story of England after the war is made up of interdependent parts and must be taken as a whole.

CHAPTER VIII

BUSINESS THE KEYSTONE

THE amateur and professional philosophers called politicians have their divergent systems for the greatest common measure of happiness, and inasmuch as the foundation of happiness for most people is physical well-being the general trend of effort under all the systems is to give individuals and families more money and the things that money will bring. We are all enlisted in the general endeavour. The difficulties begin in the fact that the proponents of one plan urge that other plans will bring not prosperity and happiness but poverty and misery. There is, however, one undisputed ground among us, namely, that England depends for her livelihood upon what she can make and what she can sell. No one, so far as I know, quarrels with the assertion that production, production and again production is and must be our salvation. All that array of figures I gave in the chapter on finance are indeed only ciphers and symbols. They are but shadowy indications as to our facilities for making railway engines for Argentina, boots and shoes for European countries, cotton goods for India.

Napoleon described England as a nation of shopkeepers, and if the description is not entirely compre-

hensive it at least hits off some of the characteristics of people who have to find their sustenance in peace and their reserves for war by shrewd, methodical, unceasing and progressive exchange of material and brains with the other countries of the world. The people of England cannot live by taking in each other's washing. There is not enough produce to be got out of the soil to keep the 45,000,000 of people who live in the comparatively small set of islands which is their home.

When the war came, all the big industries and most of the small ones had to turn their energies into directions which would be serviceable against the enemy. A man who made clocks and watches had to make the fuses which went on the end of the shells; a man who made railway metals had to turn out the shells themselves. Automobile manufacturers had to make aeroplanes. Industries such as those concerned with textiles instead of taking raw material and turning it into goods for sale abroad at a good profit, had to make it into clothes of a special kind for the soldiers. The occupation of the British commercial traveller in various parts of the world was temporarily gone. We had no goods to speak of to sell to other countries except such goods as were needed by our Allies for the prosecution of the war. It was in these circumstances that our factories, our farms, our shipping, our railways, our coal mines were busier than ever before. Instead of money to pay for all these activities coming as it largely did before from our customers all over the world, it had to be paid by the British Government. Where did the

British Government get the money from? It borrowed the money from the British people, giving them the security of the national existence and paying them a certain rate of interest. While in certain instances British manufacturers and owners took a proportion of the profit, the nation as a whole was at a tremendous loss, because goods were being made not for reproductive purposes such as exchange with other countries for necessities or for materials which would again multiply, but for purely destructive purposes. Millions of pounds worth of ammunition was blown to pieces, and there was an end of it. Millions of pounds went for the big guns, for warships, for the pay of the soldiers and sailors, all of them engaged in terribly necessary but unproductive work. This was very different from spending British money on, say railways in the Argentine which would help the production of wheat which would come to England as part of the food for the English people; very different from buying hides and skins from Australia and South America, and sending them forth in the shape of boots and shoes, boots and shoes which with the profitable price on them brought back to England a variety of articles either ready for use or ready for manufacture into some other commodity which could be sold at home or re-exported. In a word the whole fabric of trade was broken down, and England lived by trade.

With the new era which came in with peace, England had to survey her wreckage of commerce, to examine the framework which before the war made her the world

power in commerce, and to see if she could make a new start. The task was complex, and at a glance overwhelming. There was, it is true, a great demand for goods, an intensive cry for all kinds of commodities from a war-stricken world, but this war-stricken world was now touched with poverty, and the complication that ensued was that England had to take credit instead of material remuneration. Then she had to rebuild or re-equip her factories. On top of this the common people of England were demanding a coöperative share in wealth such as had never been accorded to them before. One would think that Fate would have been content with piling these disadvantages on to the old country. But it was not the end. Before the war it cost the British people about £200,000,000 a year to carry on their army and navy and other national services, and this £200,000,000 had to be found by direct or indirect taxation on the people. The war left burdens out of all proportion. For the future England has to find not £200,000,000 a year but £750,000,000 a year out of her taxation, direct or indirect. Where was it to come from in view of all the other obstacles? It was obvious to statesmen who looked ahead, that there must be an entire reformation of the business of business England. It would be impossible to impose taxes such as were represented by the new necessities on a people who were not equipped to earn even as much as they did before, not to mention the great deal more that was necessary. The people themselves saw this too. True, the immediate difficulties, the lack of shipping, the

congested railways, the sporadic labour troubles, the cost of coal and the difficulty of getting it—all these things and many others prevented immediate enterprises, prevented any dramatic dash into new spheres of effort or indeed a complete reëntry into the old spheres. At the same time there began, in 1919, a steady building up of some of the old industries as a start, while new developments were carefully projected.

The hill that had to be climbed may be sufficiently pictured from the fact that whereas for decades past British exports had gone up by hundreds of millions of pounds in value each year, they had remained stationary or nearly so throughout the war. In 1898 exports of merchandise were £294,000,000, and by 1913 they had risen by steady progress to £634,000,000. During the war years they not only ceased to make normal progress but went back, and in 1918 were only something over £500,000,000. On the other hand so great were British needs that imports jumped up from £768,000,000 in 1913 to £1,316,000,000 in 1918. Any business man will be able to draw conclusions from those figures.

The task which England has to face is to raise the proportion of production from each human unit. America is well in advance in this particular direction because the work to be done there is so vast that apart from questions of economy, the shortage of human energy requires that means be devised to supplant it or to multiply it. England is in a different position from America, because it is not a question so much of

taking advantage of natural wealth as the sheer necessity to make ends meet. It is of no use in the future to rely only on the superior workmanship of British goods. It will be impossible to conduct operations by hand which can be done more swiftly by machinery. It will be folly out of national pride or national traditions or national obstinacy to continue making by hand something which can be turned out in a tenth of the time by improved mechanical devices. The attitude of mind I encountered in a director of a British automobile company at the beginning of the war is illustrative of a good deal. I explained that I knew nothing of the technique of his business, but that I could never understand why America, where labour and materials were more expensive, could turn out automobiles so much cheaper than English firms. "They are not the same kind of articles," he said. My ignorance prevented me from controverting this, but I said that he had not met my point which was this: that the ordinary professional person who needed an automobile could get a serviceable and attractive machine at a far lower price, not relatively but actually lower, in America than he could in Britain, where the standard values in general were much lower. "Won't last, made of butter," was the reply. A residence of two years in America led me to an even stronger conviction on the lines I have indicated. It may be that some of the more expensive automobiles of Britain are of the highest workmanship, and of great durability, but I failed to gather that what I might call the middle-priced car in America was of any

shorter life than the same class of car in England. True, one would have the satisfaction of knowing the superior handicraft which had been put in the English machine. But really is this of much account? And apart from the price, there is the tremendous fact that machines in America are being turned out in such large quantities that everybody who wants a machine can get one.

The war woke England up about this matter. With the life of the country in the balance, all kinds of old notions had to be thrown on the dust heap and among them any prejudice in favour of the slower methods of production. The British could not turn out hand-made shells while the Germans were slaughtering Englishmen on the Somme. There was nothing to be said for the perfected artistry of, let us say, hand-made machine guns while our poor fellows were being shot down on the barbed wire near Ypres. And rising to the occasion the British nation developed quick production so far as munitions were concerned, and probably surpassed any country in the war. Now in peace time some of these lessons are being appreciated. They will have to be thoroughly incorporated in the whole life of the nation if bankruptcy and starvation are not to stare us in the face.

I read a little description the other day of a simple engineering operation which shows precisely the position. "There is no single operation that is performed more frequently in engineers' shops than the drilling of holes in metal for the reception of bolts, screws, spindles, etc. The old practice, and one that is most general

now, is that one machine runs one drill, a survival from the time when a man used a hand-drill. So if, say, twenty holes have to be made, each one is done separately, and for each the article must be moved once to readjust its position. The work is done, it is true, with marvellous rapidity, so fast that the drill is seen visibly descending at the rate of several inches in a minute. But go into another shop—say one of the automobile manufacturing firms—equipped with the latest machine, and you will see the twenty holes, or more, say, in a crank case or in a multi-cylinder, being drilled all at one time, from as many distinct drilling spindles, all actuated from a common shaft. The firm that retains the old machines and methods cannot stand a ghost of a chance if it has to compete in an open market with its better equipped rival, who will easily pay its work-people higher wages for fewer hours."

Somehow or other British manufacturers have got to make three times or four times the machinery, the tools, building material, leather goods, earthenware and glass, the cotton and woollen garments that they did before the war, and one of the several methods which must be combined to produce the result is the use of machinery instead of man-power. The new procedure will have to run right down throughout all the operations of the country, and there are already indications that it will not be confined to the factories. Britain has under cultivation 1,400,000 acres of land more than she had in 1914. Shortage of labour on the land will certainly be a difficulty henceforth, in spite of

the fact that the Government has stepped in with a legislative guarantee of minimum prices for wheat and oats for six years in order to encourage cultivation. Even with the additional wages which farm hands in all directions obtain at the present moment, an able-bodied young man can do very much better for himself in the cities than on the land. The drift to town life will continue to an extent which will make the new farming life even more difficult in a practical sense than it was in the old time before the war. The remedy for this is obvious. Farms are already buying apparatus such as tractors and power-driven ploughs, and replacing horse labour and man-power wherever it can be done. Agricultural implement makers' catalogues are having a great vogue, and it is undoubted that many of the mechanical appliances of America will be imported to an extent hitherto unknown. We may even make some of them ourselves.

There is a very large fishing industry round the coasts of Britain, and fish is a substantial part of the people's food which has for generations been obtained by the smacks which sailed from scores of fishing ports. Who has failed to admire the picturesque brown-sailed boats from the Western fishing villages? Alas, for romance, these brown sails are becoming less and less, and in some places have already disappeared altogether. I was stopping last autumn at a lovely village called Looe in Cornwall, where there is a large fleet of fishing boats. Every one of them now emerges into the English Channel and makes its tour of hundreds of

miles, not under the impulse of sails, but of petrol motors. What the boats have lost in picturesqueness they have gained in effectiveness. Taking the year round, each boat catches four times as many fish as it did when sails were used. There is now no dependence on the right wind, no helplessness when a calm prevails, and there is in addition greater speed, and consequently extension of the fishing field for all boats. This means more fish and more food for the British people.

Sufficient to indicate the healthy upward rise and the promise for the future in British commerce are the figures of export and import for January, 1919, and for January, 1920. Here they are:

	EXPORTS	
1919.		1920.
£47,343,181		£105,879,909
	IMPORTS	
£134,546,436		£183,498,388

The most encouraging sign here is that the proportion of increase in exports is far greater than that in imports. This, however, is but the beginning, and we have to go a great deal farther to make ourselves safe. It is not only that the country has to raise by taxation £750,000,000 a year in place of the £200,000,000 before the war, but that all necessities of life are more than doubled in price owing to the world shortage of raw material, of facilities for transmission, and means of manufacture. More important possibly even than these influences, serious as they must be, is the insistent and growing demand of labour for a far larger share not only actually but relatively in the proceeds of all

activities. Will the initiative and energy of the brains of England on the one hand and the opportunities throughout the world on the other provide a channel for riches sufficient to recompense the architects of fortune, sufficient to provide a new social system for the myriads of builders, sufficient to make permanent and stable the edifice of national prosperity? We can but wait and see.

There are some elements in the situation which stimulate hope. We have peace at last. Germany enters again the field of commerce not only with her requirements but with her supplies, and there is bound to be an enormous increase of trade as the result, and this will affect England directly and indirectly. Despite national prejudices I look for colossal transfers between the two countries. Equally important to England will be Germany's trade with the rest of the world. In a hundred directions will results be felt. German coal goes to Sweden, permitting that country to manufacture paper pulp urgently needed in England. With fresh supplies down comes the price. England gets more paper. Sweden gets more money which, in part at least, is spent in England for articles which Sweden needs. New circles of enterprise, productivity and wealth are opened up all round.

Then there is Russia, a vast country, whose national riches are barely scratched. Mineral and agricultural wealth untold abound in a land which fringes the Polar seas on the north and on the south has sunny vineyards and gardens of tropical loveliness. One hundred and

eighty million beings are in that country, which in extent and variety is truly a continent. The darkness and chaos of Russia at the moment can be nothing more than a phase. There will presently be opened up fields of development unknown since America was a virgin land. The world will soon be pouring oceans of energy into Russia. Wealth will go there and be multiplied a hundredfold. The opportunities are so great that they can be neither counted nor measured. That Britain will have a big share in this new market cannot be doubted. That she will benefit from the produce which will come forth in volume from Russia is equally a certainty.

Russia and Germany are but the two main examples from a recovering and changed world. England with manufacturing skill, with a network of trading stations over the globe, with an unsurpassed fleet of mercantile ships, is not lacking factors for success. Will she rise to the chances which are ahead? A good deal depends on happenings within the shores of England. In English politics are portents which no man may read clearly just now.

CHAPTER IX

THE INVASION BY LABOUR

VICTORY in the war would have been impossible if Britain with the other Allies could have brought to bear only the efforts, or if you like it better, the genius of generals, statesmen, inventors and organizers. I suppose in any one country they did not number more than a thousand all told. If each one of them had had the gifts of Napoleon Bonaparte they would have been between them utterly powerless by themselves to have affected the course of a single engagement, to say nothing of the campaign in general. They were truly powerful instruments, but it is not to them the main credit of victory is due. Success was brought to pass by the masses of men, and men in their prime, throughout the country. Quality was no good without quantity, and a teeming population of strong fibre was the only effective answer to the inroads of the enemy.

In the first place there was the question of soldiers; millions were required and they had to be taken from the youth and the young middle-aged of the people. England had to be stripped for them, with one exception, namely, those men engaged in making, or in

carrying from place to place the material with which the war had to be waged, and the food and clothing for the fighters. Thus it came about that the workers of England, as of all other countries, sprang into a new importance; it became apparent to themselves as well as to others that without them the war could not be won, indeed could not be contested at all. The surging tides of patriotism carried nearly four millions of them voluntarily into the fighting ranks, other millions were added under conscription.

At home equally important with the fighters in point of view of victory were the men who worked in the coal mines, in the shipyards, on the railways, in the gun factories, in the aeroplane sheds, on the farms. Manhood sprang to a premium in the war. No clique of rulers, however able or gifted, could take the nation out of danger. The rulers might, it is true, if they were given the mandate, enforce obligations on the millions of individuals by whom the nation was made up. A peaceable people not expecting and certainly not desiring war, the British were stirred to anger by the conflict thrust upon them, and in the first flush rushed to the colours in the hope and determination that the contest would be short and victory grasped within a month or two. Before the month or two had gone it became apparent that the war would be a long one, that every resource of man-power and ingenuity would be called for. Revealed to the eyes of all was the fact that this was a war of peoples and not a war of kings with professional warriors, as of old. No individual

genius could find a triumph now. The value of the common people emerged as the tremendous factor for the moment, as a tremendous lesson for history.

In the situation which arose, the solid, thorough and extensive organization of the Labour movement in Britain assumed an importance which it had never possessed before. Making slow progress through two generations, battling down industrial abuses, eliminating starvation wages in the big industries, weeding them out of the smaller occupations, gradually increasing the standard of living not only by wages but by shortening the hours of labour and improving the conditions of work, buttressing itself by sending some of its leaders to Parliament—by these and other developments the Labour movement had become an established condition in our social life and bore many promises of increased power for the future. The position of affairs, it has to be remembered, was entirely different from that in a country for example such as America. Britain had a big population in a small compass. Its national life depended on what it imported from abroad—food for home consumption, raw materials which by its factories could be turned into goods to be exported at a profit. It had no comprehensive store of products which would enable it to live its own life like America. It had no vast expansion of undeveloped territory at home on which the enterprising could find a living and possibly build up a fortune. Effort was largely concentred in the cities. Everywhere was keen competition. And in comparison with America there was not nearly enough

money to go round. Everyone had to work harder, master and man, to secure results approximate to those in the United States.

A traditional social system gave many advantages for those who raised themselves above manual labour. In the face of these things the comparative success of the Labour movement was an illustration of British tenacity under difficulty.

At the time war broke out the Labour movement was divided into two sections, that which covered industrial matters, and that which concerned itself with political action. They overlapped to some extent and by means of a joint board coöperated in general purposes; at the same time they had distinct organizations of their own. The Trade Unions were affiliated into a body which met once a year for a week's parliament of labour and was busy with matters of policy and administration all the time. The annual gathering was called the "Trades Union Congress," and as time went on the name was more or less utilized for expressing this particular branch of the Labour movement. The political section was known as the "Labour Party"—which had many trade union leaders in it, but also comprised some others, Socialists for example, who were not entitled as such to belong to the Trades Union Congress. Speaking generally, however, it was the trade union element which dominated the Labour movement in general. As I have said, a joint board decided matters of common policy. There were occasions also when a gathering of delegates would assemble for a general decision on big

national questions—such for instance as arose on conscription.

In the tumult of the first year of war there was some lack of clear thinking on the part of all classes, but in the ever-increasing tension from that date onward a clarifying of ideas went on into two main directions. With a hard determination to win the war, a determination unaccompanied by exultation and ever strengthening as the dangers increased, there went a steady realization that it was the common people only who made the winning of the war possible. The common people became conscious of an importance, which, to speak frankly, they had not previously recognized. I am not now using terms of current party politics. I put aside the clamant cries of Socialists, even the reasoned if somewhat threadbare claims of the sober Labour leaders. I am talking of the ordinary feeling of the working man who, though a little excited at election times, really in his daily life does not care a brass button about politics. The large appeals about the dignity of man and the dignity of labour, and about his being as good as any other man, and all souls having equal value—all this ran off him like water off a duck's back. True, he joined with fellow workmen very often in an association to secure better wages and better conditions, but that was the limit of his immediate and personal interest in the Labour movement. Millions did not go so far as this. They had an instinctive aversion to people whom they suspected were out to put down authority, to subvert gentility and it might be respec-

tability. All is not evil in the conservatism of old England. With an inevitable tendency of servility towards rank and money and titles there ran layers of respect for gentle speech and manners, for the educated tongue and the educated mind, and there was associated consciously or unconsciously a feeling that comfort and success in life made for a higher grade of behaviour. The wrongs and injustices mixed up with this social system, although they stirred some, were on the whole slurred over. Life had to be taken as it was found.

But the deepening influences of the war produced a new state of affairs. A young man on the battlefield discovered that no question of social position increased the value of an individual in emergency. Lawyer, artist, banker, navvy, in the trenches together were reduced to a primal equality. That was a fact brought home to vast hordes of men on the fighting ground, and at the same time their compatriots at home working on war supplies saw more clearly as the weeks went on that without the bulk of English manhood, and the spirit of English manhood was common to poor as well as to rich, the war would have spelt disaster and destruction to the country. It needed no preachings or lessons or exhortations from orators of any party to point this out.

There had sprung up as part of the Labour movement a conjunction of effort between three great industries, or rather the three unions which comprise the majority of the workers in those particular industries. These consisted of the miners, the railwaymen and the

transport workers. The miners who brought up coal needed by the munition factories, warships, and the ships, the transport workers who operated at the ports, the railwaymen who drove the trains with troops and supplies from one end of the country to the other—if these men were as the results of combined impulse to stop work, the war would have been at an end so far as England was concerned. The unthinking may suppose that the Government could have ordered out troops to make these men work or shoot them down. It would have been a big job to shoot down a million and a half of workmen. There is every probability that fellow workmen by that time in the Army would have refused to take a hand in it. I give these instances for the sake of showing the power which organized Labour held in the country, and how the country as well as Labour itself had the lesson forced home upon them.

What was the result of all these factors on the thoughts and emotions of the common people? It was a steady increase in the number of Trade Unions; men who hitherto had remained aloof from these organizations had their imaginations stirred and joined up with the other fellows. The number of trade unionists in 1914 was 3,900,000. In 1919 the number was 5,200,000. There can be no doubt that during 1920 the total will approach 6,000,000.

Side by side with the Trade Union increase there was the growth on the political side of the movement linked up with it, and to a large extent interdependent. The number of Labour members in Parliament during the

war was thirty-six. At the Victory Election at the end of 1918 when a great surge of national enthusiasm swept away a good many Labour members who unjustly enough were suspected of pacifist tendencies, there were nevertheless returned to the House of Commons a total of sixty-three. Mr. Arthur Henderson was amongst those defeated, but has since secured admission to the House at a by-election. There is an indication that the numbers will be largely increased from this time onward. What may be called the extreme section of the British Labour movement, namely, that of the Socialists, of whom Mr. Ramsay Macdonald and Mr. Philip Snowden are the recognized leaders, while intellectually to the fore and by far the most effective in oratory, are nevertheless but a mere handful of the whole. They obtained a misleading importance abroad by the touch of brilliance which they possess. It is sufficient to say that the "Independent Labour Party" which is their special organization (which is included in the whole of the Labour movement), numbers thirty-five thousand out of the five million of the movement.

It was only twelve years ago that something like a sensation was caused by the inclusion in the Cabinet for the first time of a Labour leader, namely, Mr. John Burns. True, there had been subordinate offices given at intervals to Labour leaders, but to make one the head of a great national department—the Local Government Board—was an experiment which some people thought was going very far. On the whole, however, the country was pleased by the decision of Sir Henry

Campbell Bannerman, the new Prime Minister, but there could be no mistaking the little thrill of newness which everybody felt at this appointment. What is the situation now? Mr. Lloyd George brought into the Ministry not one, but several Labour leaders. Among those who have held Cabinet rank at one period or another in the war years are Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. John Hodge, Mr. J. R. Clynes, Mr. G. N. Barnes, Mr. George Roberts. Ministers not in the Cabinet included Mr. William Brace, Mr. G. J. Wardle, Mr. J. Parker. There have been some resignations and exchanges, but Labour a year after the war still held a strong minority representation in the Government. The important consideration in connection with this is that Labour leaders, already men of affairs and skill in organization, were being trained in responsibility, not for a class, but for the whole country. There was not a man amongst them who had not begun life by working with his hands for a living. They had now to share in governing an ancient country with an hereditary monarch, a country which still felt the influence of a powerful aristocracy, and which derived a very large part of its strength from prosperous middle classes. Conservatives and Liberals will both agree that the Labour men carried out their functions with ability and breadth of vision; some of them achieved high distinction among war statesmen. For instance, Mr. J. R. Clynes was probably the best as well as the most popular food controller the country had. (The office was both thankless and difficult.) The appointment of

Labour ministers has and will continue to have another effect. Membership of the Cabinet carries with it the honorary distinction of the Privy Council. A Privy Councillor who happens to be out of Cabinet office has the right to sit on the front Opposition Bench facing the Government and take his part in leadership in challenging Government decisions, in criticizing national policy, and endeavouring to secure alternate lines of action. Since the war there has been a large showing of Labour leaders on the front Opposition Bench, including Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Brace, and Mr. Hodge, and they are supplemented by Mr. J. H. Thomas and others who have been admitted to the Privy Council without having been in the Cabinet. All this means that the atmosphere of the House of Commons is undergoing alteration. Men who, less than fifteen years ago, received some measure of respect but who were not ranked as serious factors in Government and who by the smaller minds were merely tolerated, if not patronized, have assumed a position of equality among contemporary statesmen.

The position in the House of Commons is linked up with the position in the country. The members of the Labour movement with their families number half the population. The extension of the franchise puts one in two of the population on the voting register, and this makes obvious Labour's new power. It is not as if Labour were just a loose aggregation of individuals. They comprise an organized strength. There are about twenty thousand trade union branches throughout the

length and breadth of the land. There are some hundreds of local branches on the political side of the Labour movement, these branches being concerned largely with the promotion of Labour candidatures for Parliament in the particular constituencies in which they are situated.

Among the changes for which the war was responsible was the institution of a Ministry of Labour, the chief of which was a member of the Government. A step forward in another direction was made by the Labour party itself, that is to say the political section of the movement. It threw open its ranks not merely to craftsmen and to labourers, but to brain workers. Under the old system it was difficult, if not impossible, for individuals who had no association actually with a working class life, but who agreed with the emotions and methods of the Labour movement, to join formally in its work and be associated with its efforts. This shut out not only intellectuals, but practical men who might be of the greatest service to the Labour cause. Already the change has produced its effect, and some leading Liberals have now enlisted, and it is more than possible that some Conservatives, curious as it may seem, will also be found under the leadership of those whom their party used to despise.

The uprising of the Labour movement and the stern determination of the Labour leaders not to form connections with either of the existing old parties, has led to some confusion in electoral contests—especially in view of the added complexity that the Government of

the day, being a Coalition one, is diversely composed of Conservatives, Liberals and Labour men. Since the General Election of 1918, by-elections have generally produced at least three candidates, (1) the Coalition candidate, (2) the independent Liberal candidate (many Liberals under Mr. Asquith being fiercely critical of Mr. Lloyd George's administration) (3) the Labour candidate. At each of the contests Labour has polled very heavily and in some cases successfully, as in the case of Mr. Arthur Henderson, who, contesting the Conservative Lancashire town of Widnes, wrested it from the Coalition. One can hardly resist the conclusion that Labour is bound to grow stronger in an electoral sense, and the riddle which presents itself is, how and in what proportion the three parties will eventually align themselves into two distinct bodies of the State. It is practically certain that this is the situation which will evolve itself. Britain does not love the bloc system. It seems reasonable to suppose that the centres of gravity in political mentality will not be shifted, that there will still be the two streams of tendency, progressive and cautionary. Whether the progressive side will be led by Labour is a thing to be guessed at. At present it looks as if Labour will be in the saddle. But there are enormous moderating influences throughout the country which are not vocal, and they run through a great part of the masses of men and women who make up the Labour movement itself. On the other hand there have been indications of a determination, some people call it a recklessness, in the direction

of rough and ready action towards an out and out rule by Labour.

In the early stages of the war the Trade Unions in the great industries relinquished for the sake of extra production many of their rules and privileges long sought for, and much treasured, conditions as to hours of work, conditions of the kinds of work for skilled and unskilled men, conditions on women and boy labour, conditions as to methods of payment. In these matters and in others the workmen had been for a generation seeking for freedom, battling down abuses which made life hard and robbed them of a tolerable and happy existence. Everything went overboard under the pressure of the war. The emergency of the time did more than that, for the various regulations imposed restrictions on workmen in vital industries, such restrictions for instance as that which prohibited them from moving from one factory to another when higher remuneration was offered. Here and there were some mutterings, some fierce descriptions of Mr. Lloyd George, who at the time was Minister of Munitions, as a tyrant; but all these things came to very little. The call of patriotism overwhelmed complaints and personal disadvantage, overwhelmed the cries of a few hotheads among the unions about the abolition of their long-cherished rights. The Government promised that when the war was over all that had been taken away would be restored, that no union should be the worse off because it had temporarily abrogated the conditions of Labour which hitherto had been so rigidly enforced. From

time to time there were little outbursts from sections, but the Government by one means and another carried on the industries of the country without serious interruption. Some of the Labour men, including representatives of the more moderate sections, had fears that the autocratic dictatorship of war time would leave its legacy in the shape of great or small oppressions of the unions after the war was over. They knew the prejudice of those who in their own term they lumped together as the capitalist class, and they foresaw that part of the special conditions of wartime might in some instances be perpetuated to the grave injury of the working people of the country. As a matter of fact they were miles away from the truth. The growing importance of the workers lent to the growth of their power. When the war was ended they were in a position which made them virtual masters of the country.

It was only to be expected that in the first flush of new strength, with the strain of the war removed, Labour here and there should kick over the traces; that is exactly what happened. The price of everything, food, fuel, clothing, house rent, was still double what it had been before the war, and many grades of workmen complained that the remuneration although added to was not the equivalent of the pre-war money they had received. Extremists were loud in their protests and in their threats; even moderate men among the rank and file were affected. In most cases disputes were brought to a settlement—almost always by concessions on the part of employers. Meanwhile

LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY

there was going on throughout the country the consciousness that Labour was becoming all-powerful; also the consciousness that Labour could not henceforth be treated as something to be threatened with a view to the interests of employers. The community (of which Labour formed so large a proportion) felt also that the part the working classes had played in the war entitled them to a new consideration. Suffering and privations to tens of thousands in middle class homes had also forced the lesson that men and women, whatever their station, must have the wherewithal to live healthfully and with at least some degree of comfort. In the matter of prices, when in the later summer of 1918 the railwaymen of the country through their union demanded a reconsideration of the Government scale of recompense for those on the lowest rate of pay, the Government refused to act promptly, the order went forth from the union that all railwaymen were to strike. Practically all of them did strike. Trains ceased running everywhere. Millions of people were put to inconvenience and loss. Within a period of hours the Government had organized a few trains driven by amateurs or by the fraction of men who had remained in, and had supplemented this service by motor lorries drawn from war establishments in order to convey food to the cities. Appeals were made to the public to help the Government, which took the strong line that whether the railwaymen were right or wrong they ought not suddenly to have held the people of the country up to ransom. They refused

to consider the railwaymen's claim until they all went back to work. In the course of three days the situation became the most menacing that England has had to face for generations, because there was a prospect of other great unions uniting with the railwaymen and stopping the whole industry of the country. As it happened the Government was in possession of the railways, and was therefore one of the interested parties in the dispute as well as being the judge. This was pointed out by the railwaymen. On the other hand the Government argued that if a union could impose its terms on Parliament by force, Parliamentary Government was at an end and we were on the verge of a revolution. There was no getting away from this point of view. The Conservative instincts of the old country were brought to bear. The leaders of the Labour movement from the various industries came in as negotiators, while people at large did everything possible to help the Government, which was running a skeleton service of trains. The end of it was that the Government agreed to a certain minimum for the men whose cases had been in dispute and left other matters open for settlement by negotiation. Some claimed it a victory for the Government, and some for the men. What stands out for good or evil is the fact that the Government had to recede from its decision of refusing to make a concession until the men had returned to work. The strike and the result was an object lesson as to the condition of the country. It may also have been a signal for the future.

CHAPTER X

LABOUR BATTLING FOR ENTHRONEMENT

WHILE the general impulse which is taking Labour towards power is unmistakable there is a measure of doubt as to the road through which success will be forced. The big polling of Labour at a series of by-elections indicates a substantial chance of a parliamentary majority, possibly at the next general election, certainly within the course of a year or two. A parliamentary majority means a Labour Cabinet.

But there are Labour enthusiasts who see a shorter cut to power, and these men are eager to challenge by force—industrial force—any existing Government which will not adopt some particular economic plan on which they have set their hearts. A partial illustration was given by the strike of the railwaymen. At the moment of writing the miners are urging complete nationalization of the coal mines, and there is discussion among them as to whether their argument with the Government shall or shall not take the form of a strike threat. The threat will not be made unless it is intended to carry it into effect. We have passed the stage of empty words. I can hear some people saying, "Well,

let them strike." The matter cannot be dismissed thus lightly. In the railway dispute if the Government had not met the men at least half way the other great unions would certainly have made common action. Business would have been brought to a standstill. Supplies of food would have ceased. Emergency measures by the Government would have been utterly inadequate, and if the Government in those circumstances had madly sought to rule by force, blood would have been flowing within twenty-four hours. One half of the nation would have been facing the other half. The alternative was that the Government should acknowledge defeat. A general election would naturally have followed, but Parliamentary government would at least temporarily have been overthrown. In some form it would have had to be resuscitated, but in such a situation the issue is on the knees of the gods, and England for good or evil would have been in the throes of revolution. All this is a fancy picture of what might have been. But it is also a picture of what may happen next month or next year.

Whether Labour achieves power by the steady building up of a parliamentary majority or by what I regard as the less likely method of "direct action," it will be confronted by problems of administration and legislation rendered particularly difficult by its own tenets and professions. It will have to govern a community and not one class. It will have powerful opponents. Among its own adherents there will arise that spirit of cautiousness which is an English characteristic. On

the whole I am inclined to think that the first essay of Labour in government will be a brief one.

The war caused England to plunge into the expedient of piece-meal Socialism. I daresay that some Socialists would quarrel with this description, but an impartial observer may fairly use these words in reference to the seizure by the Government for the use of the community of the main means of production, sale, and transport. In effect if not in form there was a nationalization of mines, railways and shipping, a nationalization of the production of food at home and its import from abroad. You could not sell a sack of wheat, buy a pound of butter, or move a ship, or build a house, except under Government restriction or regulation. Everybody in the country endorsed the general policy because under the stress of war a self-respecting people will stand both loss and discomfort, and even privation. But it does not follow that general opinion would agree that changes made for war purposes should become permanent features in the life of the country. Everything was turned topsy-turvy by the great emergency. War policy was not necessarily a guide for the conduct of the community in normal times. I remember a damning attack made by the Opposition on the Government in reference to some wasteful procedure which would have ruined a private firm and destroyed the reputation of any captain of industry who had permitted it. It was an instance of stupidity and negligence as well as of waste. It fell to the lot of Mr. Balfour, then the First Lord of the Admiralty, to

present the Government's case. I forget the actual facts, but the tenor of Mr. Balfour's bland reply was that waste was essential to progress, waste was essential to achievement. Bravely persuasive, with alert dialectical skill, he showed how nothing could be accomplished without waste. He is a big man, Mr. Balfour, in his way. He did not convince the House of Commons, but he quieted it. Such are the effects produced by the emotions of war. Let Mr. Balfour try that speech in peace time, and see what kind of effect it would have.

Therefore there is nothing very strange in the fact that conservative, practical-minded old England, cautious in theory, but often enough quite quick in action, applied swiftly and comprehensively a system which was at least in close relation to Socialism in all its main activities. New forms of control were not meant to be permanent. It was obvious that they comprised but a transitory policy to meet a necessity.

First one industry and then another came under Government control, although by the word "control" I do not mean necessarily detailed administration; for instance, there were the railways. Of course, the railways were of enormous importance in the actual war operations, owing to the fact that they had to carry soldiers to and fro to the coast, as well as enormous volumes of shells, guns, food and other material, and had at the same time to continue to convey from the various ports of Great Britain to their destinations the imported supplies necessary for the population at

home. The Government appointed the heads of all the railway companies to a committee to run the railways, and made a Cabinet Minister, the President of the Board of Trade, the chairman. The detailed arrangements for the railway service of the country was left in the hands of the railway chiefs, subject to the fact that they were not working for profits for the shareholders, but for the good of the nation. The Government guaranteed an income which would be equal to that received under the normal conditions of 1913. This state of things continued after the war. When quarrels arose on questions of wages, it was the Government which was looked to as the employer, although as a matter of fact the railway chiefs made the arrangements

A somewhat similar arrangement existed in regard to coal. Nominally the Government was responsible for the coal mines of the country, and did in fact fix the price of coal to the consumer. But the colliery owners continued to run the mines. Then there was the question of food. A Government Food Controller supervised the distribution of the principal food stuffs and fixed the prices as well as the quantities.

The country was seriously in need of houses, at least half a million of them, for of course, all building operations had been stopped during the war. Inasmuch as the Government controlled the supply of building material, the building of dwellings was in effect under the Government guidance and command.

These are the outstanding examples of what may be

called socialistic experiments—although Socialists furiously contend that they were instances of bureaucratic and not of socialistic Government. There is, of course, something in this contention, but it cannot be denied that, under the necessities of war and of the confused conditions following the war, an approach was made towards what the Socialists long and persistently had advocated, namely, the nationalization of leading industries. It should be said in parenthesis that a good many Labour men who would not describe themselves as out and out Socialists were also in favour of this nationalization.

What are the general results of these experiments necessarily persisted in long after the war had come to an actual conclusion? The country is struggling to emerge from a period of chaos, and whatever methods had been used there would undoubtedly have been many inequalities, many hardships, a good deal of confusion and ineffectiveness. At the end of 1919 there were repeated agitations in the country against the decisions of the Government departments, against some of their ways of doing things, against many of the results which followed. Farmers, it was said, were making extraordinary profits, while milk remained at a shilling a quart in the cities, a price which probably penalized the babies of poor parents, perhaps sent many of them to an early grave. The price of imported meat fluctuated apparently in an erratic manner. One week it was said that there was a glut of beef; another week that beef was almost unobtainable. In the early au-

tumn household coal went up six shillings a ton because there was not enough of it, and because the cost of production had increased. In December household coal went down ten shillings a ton because there was plenty of it.

These few facts give some idea of the mixed state of affairs which England finds herself in during the troubled time of what may be called reconstruction. There can be no doubt at all that bad as is the general situation under the Government's control it would have been very much worse if Government's control had suddenly been withdrawn and the community handed over to cut-throat competition between trades, individuals, and selfish interests generally.

While the old Toryism is dead as the result of the war there is springing up a new Liberalism which may prove to be the chief, indeed the only, force with which Labour will be faced. Its stream of thought is against nationalization as the cure-all remedy, and in the place of nationalization it puts a greatly extended coöperation with working people who are to share in the profits of industries, and also in their management. Nationalization is claimed to be inseparable from some form of bureaucratic domination, and bureaucracy goes towards damping down initiative, and takes away something from energy. This school of thought pushes forward the idea that increased production is necessary all round, especially necessary for Labour itself, which otherwise in its search for better conditions will find itself in a blind alley.

The general proposition of Labour leaders is that wealth is unequally shared and that a readjustment of method will lead to comfortable homes for millions who live beneath the comfort line. Against this it is urged that there will not be enough to go round unless wealth is increased by more production, and this increased production will be retarded by nationalization. "That is wrong," retort the Labour men. "Nationalization will increase production."

The figures showing the rise in recent years of direct taxation, which applies more to the middle classes and the rich, and also of indirect taxation (duties on tea, tobacco, alcohol, etc.), largely paid by the poor, have some bearing on the question. In the war years the excess profits duty of course swelled the direct taxes.

Year	Indirect	Direct
1892–93	55.9	44.1
1897–98	52.1	47.9
1913–14	42.5	57.5
1915–16	40.	60.
1916–17	23.8	76.2
1918–19	18.6	81.4

Throughout the country 3,406,000 persons are chargeable with income tax; 59,100 have incomes of over £2,000; 148 have incomes of over £100,000, the total taxable income of these individuals being £27,–600,000. They have to pay nearly half of it, £13,–352,000 in income and super-tax.

England has to choose between two courses, one in the direction of nationalization of at least those industries which are primarily needed for the daily domestic

material needs of her people, or on the other hand choosing some other form not only of resuscitating but of increasing, revitalizing, and enormously extending her productiveness by allowing free scope to individual initiative, and at the same time giving Labour a share, a share which shall not be in the nature of a dole, but a real percentage for effort expended. Brains and hands have to be balanced. One thing is certain, that there can be no return to the old laizzez-faire methods. We are not rich enough for it. We have not enough men for it. Some new line has to be struck out. Truly England stands at the crossroads. The involved question which faces the country, therefore, is this—whether under activities similar to those which prevailed before the war, or with such modifications as had been brought about by the war, it is possible to carve out a more comfortable life for the vast mass of the people even though it should necessitate a redistribution of income owned by the rich, together with a remodelling of industrial enterprises by the introduction in part of Labour management. Is it better to proceed with new emotions to improve old methods, or to start in with a new conception altogether of what the country can do in her special fields of action, and to revolutionize completely not only our duties towards our neighbours, but our methods of carrying them out? Even the forward looking visionaries of Labour, while discounting much of the talk of more production as capitalistic artfulness, pay lip service to the idea of better and more effective activity on the farm and in the factory by

coöperative effort, and also—for this is one of the great points—the elimination of competition.

In the daily struggle of expediency by the Government and by the people at large there is no sharply outlined policy along these two lines, but force of circumstances compels some thought and a good deal of individual action in the respective directions.

It has to be remembered that there are many contradictory factors so far as industry is concerned arising, of course, from the general dislocation, while there are complaints in places like dockyard towns on the matter of unemployment. The merchant shipbuilding yards are choked with work which cannot be executed on account, to some extent, of lack of labour, and to some extent through lack of material and transport facilities. There is an overwhelming demand for automobiles, and orders are placed at many of the factories for delivery months ahead, and in some cases years ahead. These are but instances. Sporadic unemployment there is and must be, but in view of the demands on Britain for products at home and abroad, it seems as if there will be not only enough work, but a good deal too much work for all the people of the country if organization proceeds along the lines which would be adopted by a business employer whose business, while to some extent disorganized by unforeseen happenings, possesses immense potentialities.

What has become increasingly obvious is this—that a population of forty-six millions with high natural capacity for practical work, with a framework of world-

wide trade, must somehow devise a scheme by which the industry of the country can be increased to double or perhaps to treble what it used to be in the old days. How can this be done? In the new after-the-war world there will arise great new markets. That is one thing. Another is that war inventions which can be adapted to peace uses are available for increased production. But these things are of little use without the entire remodelling of a system of output. What is needed and what is perhaps inevitable is a new industrial revolution similar to that which followed the introduction of machinery a century or more ago. Only this time instead of setting up an industrial tyranny so far as the workers are concerned, it will have to comprise as part of its fabric the coöperation of the workers.

The tendencies of the time are not without their menace. They are also touched with hope. All that can be said definitely is that England is evolving a new order of society.

CHAPTER XI

IRELAND

A DARK cloud has risen on the west of the British Isles, a cloud which may lighten and drift away, or may gather and intensify till it breaks in a storm of destruction and desolation. Bound up in the fate of England is the future of Ireland.

Is this particular section of the United Kingdom to be a disintegrating influence? Is it to be worse than that? Are there within the shores of the Emerald Isle the seeds of bloody revolution? Outsiders in other lands, sympathetic and hostile, are watching developments, and most of them ask at the end of some discussion on the matter, "What is England going to do?" If they lived within the British Isles they would put the question in an entirely different form; they would ask, "What is Ireland going to do?" Long past is the time when England's intentions with regard to Ireland provided the keynote. England's policy for Ireland now is open for all the world to see and to examine as a whole or in detail, and at this moment Ireland's fate is in Ireland's hands. What does Ireland intend to make of it? True, the reply will settle some troublesome matters for England; it will settle the kind of

existence Ireland is to have for a long range of years. The reply, moreover, must be not in words, not in rhetoric; it must be in action, in a frame of mind. There is no doubt that Ireland has had heavy grievances. Irish affairs in the middle of last century provide an episode which it is not pleasant for England to look back upon. Ill-housed, half-starving, oppressed under semi-feudal laws of special Irish growth, Ireland was treated with indifference and in some cases with cruel neglect. Even if one discounts the suggestions of deliberate tyranny there remains a sufficiently hard case. For fifty years there has been a cumulative improvement, but even down to recent times Tory Bourbons in England have steadily opposed the grant of self-government to Ireland.

Now Ireland with a good deal of material prosperity is in the hands of a large majority who refuse to send representatives to the British Parliament in London and declare for independence, who have despatched emissaries to the United States to raise money and secure sympathy, who refuse to be satisfied with local self-government, who claim the right to settle the affairs of Ireland without regard to the interests of the United Kingdom as a whole, who show contempt for the suggestion that separation would act to their own disadvantage. Ireland cites ancient wrongs—freely admitted on all hands—disregards or slurs over, sometimes even justifies, an event which made a deep impression on the slow moving English people, namely, the tragic rebellion in 1916 against the English Govern-

ment. Sinn Fein Ireland says she desires and intends to break away.

English statesmen struggle to find a way out of the difficulty, and the English Parliament offers self-government for purely Irish affairs. One set of Irishmen find fault with the plan for one group of reasons, another set of Irishmen reject it for exactly the opposite set of reasons. Here indeed is drama in the making. What will be the outcome? The outcome will be as Ireland wills it.

The early story of Ireland is not greatly different from that of many other countries in turbulent periods of the world's history. A Celtic race, the Irish have a strong admixture in the north from Scotland, and in other parts a sprinkling of the English, though this English admixture after a lapse of generations and centuries is now well moulded into the common stock. It is the fashion to talk of oppressions and revolts in Ireland during past centuries. Well, the other parts of Britain were not exactly peaceful and placid centres of government. There were wrongs resulting from the settlers from Scotland and also from the ravages of Cromwell's soldiers, to take but two examples, but England and Scotland or parts of them were fighting like tiger cats for centuries. Cromwell was not precisely a popular person among powerful and extensive sections of the English. The King's writ did not always run smoothly among the Welsh tribes who made up another Celtic nation.

Let me quote a few words from the Scotsman who has

recently been acting as Chief Secretary for Ireland, namely, Mr. Ian Macpherson. The history of the Irish Celt in the matter of grievances was, he said, nothing in comparison with that of the Scottish Celt.

"Tell me a single instance in Irish history which can compare in iniquity and in outrage with the massacre of Glencoe. Tell me an incident in Irish history which can compare for a single moment with the butchery of the gallant Highland clans by the Duke of Cumberland and his men after the Rebellion."

And yet when all is said and done there is something specially tragic and perturbing in connection with the Irish and their relations with the English. The devil is in the strip of water which separates Britain and Ireland. In progress of time a certain common footing was arrived at in connection with England, Scotland, and Wales, who were joined together geographically. Ireland although not so very far away was cut off by water—and even now means of transit are very important for the purpose of civilization. Ireland was and is separated from influences which make for amelioration. This physical accident of a few miles of sea water is behind the trouble which fringes Ireland at the present time. Specially evil days fell upon Ireland in the first half of the 19th century following the corrupt bargain which eliminated the Irish Parliament. Effective democracy is after all but young and has but a short life to look back upon. Politicians and other parasites who had much power for a generation following the

French revolution treated Ireland as a doubtful and possibly a dangerous dependency, and exploited and ill-treated her. Industries dwindled. Presently famine threatened her. The hungry forties are still a potent memory. From the time that free trade took Irish agricultural profit away began the enormous migration to the new country on the other side of the Atlantic where Irish descendants still cherish the traditions implanted by father, grandfather and great-grandfather. It has to be remembered, however, that England herself was not a happy place for most of the common people in those far off days. Ireland suffered, it is true, under a malignant fate for the time. But the British, let it be recalled, were themselves on the verge of revolution at the time of the passage of the Reform Bill in the thirties, and the rest of Europe could hardly be described as free, happy, or entirely unoppressed.

In the seventies began the organized campaign for Home Rule and there was a start also in that progressive series of land laws culminating in 1909, land laws designed and as a whole effective for the purpose of giving opportunities to the tenant farmer, who previously had been under great disadvantages. In the eighties Gladstone took up Home Rule, and though it was defeated the extended franchise in Britain from this time onward caused widened and deepened expression of sympathy for the Irish cause. Through a period of Irish repressions and outrages two influences were beginning to make themselves manifest among the English people, one being a desire for more freedom for the Irish people,

another an inclination to give material assistance to a country in bad fortune. The latter was the first to find demonstration. It is strictly accurate to say that during the past thirty years Ireland has become a changed land. England has poured forth scores of millions of pounds to meet her needs. Tenants have been safeguarded in their tenures, have been given facilities to purchase their holdings. Industries have been fostered. Model cottages have taken the place of the old cabins. In a sketch of the Irish land laws Mr. W. F. Bailey, an estates commissioner, says, "It may fairly be asserted that so far as the occupying tenantry was concerned, there was no more objectionable land system in Europe than that which prevailed in Ireland before 1870, and no more favourable system than that which exists at the present time."

Certainly it is not possible to justify the claim that Ireland is now an oppressed nation in a material sense. Here is one evidence of latter-day prosperity. According to the latest available figures the deposits and cash balances in Irish joint stock banks was £91,361,000 on December 31, 1917. With the exception of the years 1901 and 1905 the deposits and cash balances have increased each year since 1887, when they stood at £29,771,000.

What of the charge that England is greedily sucking revenue from Ireland? The population of Ireland is about a tenth part of the population of the British Isles. A Treasury return for the year 1918–1919 shows that Ireland contributes less than two and a half per

cent. to the total required for the Imperial expenditure. I give the actual figures:

	ENGLAND	Per cent	SCOTLAND	Per cent	IRELAND	Per cent
Total revenue.....	£691,062,000	83.70	£97,321,500	11.79	£37,275,000	4.51
Local expenditure.	£143,847,500	77.53	£19,527,500	10.52	£22,161,500	11.95
Balance available for Imperial expenditure.....	£547,214,500	85.49	£77,794,000	12.15	£15,113,500	2.36

That does not look much like bloodsucking by Britain.

In recent years, England in hard times, to settle the Irish question has had to meet the fact that there were two irreconcilable political forces face to face. Ulster is the home of the north country Irish, many of whose forebears came from Scotland, and it has been immovably opposed to a separate Parliament for Ireland. Only twenty-five per cent. of the Irish population are Unionists, but they comprise among them some of the most prosperous and influential members of the community. Belfast, their headquarters, is the thriving centre of industries which contribute much to Irish welfare. It is, moreover, a banking centre with activities radiating throughout the agricultural community practically all over Ireland. In some respects Belfast is the business capital of the country. Then there is the fact that the dour Unionists of Ulster are Protestants. Nationalist Ireland is Catholic. Here is a great dividing line which

in the opinion of many is the most important of all. On various grounds of business and patriotic impulse Ulstermen oppose Home Rule, but they oppose it principally because they refuse to be "under the domination of a Roman Catholic Parliament" as the first Irish Parliament is certain to be. Nationalists wave this objection aside and they have Protestants in their ranks, and many other leaders, who are equally certain that the Ulstermen will suffer no disadvantage through religious opinions. Ulster is unconvinced. Everybody remembers how with the Home Rule Bill on the Statute Book Ulstermen with Sir Edward Carson at their head prepared for armed resistance. This was the state of affairs when the war with Germany broke on the world. Britain had to face her fate. John Redmond rose in the House of Commons and in a noble speech pledged the sword of Ireland to Britain's cause. He and other leaders in the south as well as in the north worked hard in the patriotic cause, and tens of thousands of men were raised for the army. For the moment Home Rule was in abeyance. Gallant Willie Redmond, the Irish leader's brother who was well over military age, put on khaki and eventually sacrificed his life on the battle front. Another political leader who died in action was young T. M. Kettle, who was as brilliant as he was popular.

As the war went on a movement in Ireland called Sinn Fein, "Ourselves Alone," began to make headway. There was perhaps more of literature than of revolution in its genesis, but it was seized upon by the local labour

movements, and then in the course of months grew into a big political organization. It developed a fierce motive power. It said that the nationalists led by Mr. Redmond were a tame lot, and that nothing was to be obtained by temporizing with England. From this attitude of mind there sprang swiftly definite plans. On Easter Monday, 1916, there was an armed rising in Dublin; murders were committed, soldiers, policemen and civilians were shot, the Post Office was seized. British soldiers were used to quell the revolt, and there was a considerable outcry because of injustices and a still fiercer outcry when the leaders of the revolt to the number of sixteen were condemned to death and executed, and a large number of others were sent to temporary imprisonment in England. On the ground of expediency it was urged that there should have been lenient treatment for all these people; no one should have been executed. An ardency for Irish independence, a devotion to a national cause, were urged as an excuse for the rising and for the deaths which followed it. Altogether 300 people were killed, and 2,000 injured as the result of this attempt, justifiable or not, to stab England in the back while she was fighting for existence with her Allies. There was no doubt of the sympathy of the rebels with the Germans in their war on Britain. Sir Roger Casement, who was arrested in Ireland in connection with this seditious movement, was found to have been in Germany, where he had appealed to Irish soldiers, prisoners of war, to join in fighting against Britain.

It is worth quoting here the finding of a commission composed of Lord Hardinge, Mr. Justice Shearman and Sir Mackenzie Chalmers, three strong and experienced men of judicial mind. It hit the Ulstermen as well as the Sinn Feiners.

The general conclusion that we draw from the evidence before us is that the main cause of the rebellion appears to be that lawlessness was allowed to grow up unchecked, and that Ireland for several years past has been administered on the principle that it was safer and more expedient to leave law in abeyance if collision with any faction of the Irish people could thereby be avoided.

Such a policy is the negation of that cardinal rule of Government which demands that the enforcement of law and the preservation of order should always be independent of political expediency.

We are also of opinion that on the outbreak of war all drilling and manœuvring by unrecognized bodies of men, whether armed or unarmed, should have been strictly prohibited, and that as soon as it became known to the Irish Government that the Irish Volunteers and the Citizen Army were under the control of men prepared to assist your Majesty's enemies if the opportunity should be offered to them, all drilling and open carrying of arms by these bodies should have been forcibly suppressed.

It does not appear to be disputed that the authorities in the spring of 1916, while believing that the seditious bodies would not venture unaided to break into insurrection, were convinced that they were prepared to assist a German landing.

We are further of opinion that at the risk of a collision early steps should have been taken to arrest and prosecute leaders and organizers of sedition.

Two other events since 1914 stand out as landmarks on the way to the present position of affairs. One was a convention of all sections of Irishmen called together by the British Government with the purpose of securing a scheme of self-government. All classes were invited. There was a period of great and hopeful work, and England's attitude at this time might be summarized: "Here are you, all Irishmen, and we ask you to produce among yourselves a scheme of Home Rule which will be workable. You can have practically what you like if you will agree upon it." The convention broke up in disagreement. At the end of 1918 after the Armistice there was a General Election in the United Kingdom. Of the old constitutional Nationalist Party but seven won seats; of the seven, Mr. Devlin was the only notable personality, and Mr. Dillon, who had succeeded Mr. Redmond in the leadership, was among those beaten. Outside Ulster, Sinn Fein swept the country, securing 73 seats out of the total of 105 Irish seats. Sinn Fein members refused to attend the Parliament in London, and the position in Ireland became worse than it had been for many a long year. That was on the political side. De Valera, the Sinn Fein leader, went to America, where there was an open campaign for the independence of Ireland. In Ireland itself there was indeterminate but continuous work along the same lines among a great part of the population who only a few short years ago professed themselves anxious for the constitutional Home Rule settlement now thrust upon them.

A philosopher divorced from any national prejudices may well regard the interminable welter of Irish affairs with amazement. The Irish have produced some of the most brilliant men, some of the great geniuses. In war, in business, in poetry, they have triumphed. Why cannot they carve a settled contentment for their own country? It cannot be completely the wickedness of England that is responsible for the prevalent and long continued unhappiness of Ireland. England's history with regard to other parts of her dominions at home and abroad has shown that she does possess some of the qualities which result in contentment and prosperity for the land over which the Union Jack is the symbol of ultimate sovereignty. And the puzzlement is increased by the extraordinary human attributes of the Irish. They have among them not only the hard equipment of success in the more material directions, but they possess also in a high, almost a superlative degree, the essentials of what is fascinating in men and women of all ages. Quick-wittedness, affection and loyalty are theirs without stint or limit. Are they not known throughout all the nations as the apostles of humour? (And the humorous nation has attained very nearly the peak of civilization.) You have only to go to Ireland and mix with the common people to be both stimulated and delighted. It is a memory which lives in all who have any sensibilities. A colleague of mine representing a newspaper opposed to Home Rule some years ago went to Ireland to write a series of articles about the condition of affairs there. Irish

Nationalist leaders—they included Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Willie Redmond, Mr. Devlin, Mr. T. M. Kettle—received him with open arms, entertained him and treated him like a real friend. There was not a trace of scheming in this. It was just the fact that the visitor was a stranger and to that extent a guest in their land. And then the incidental delights of Irish wit—who can equal them? I was once in the West of Ireland and had the opportunity of tasting the illicit whiskey known as poteen, and I mentioned the experience to a well-known lawyer whom I met at the hotel. He promised to send me some of this liquor to my London residence. At Christmastime there arrived a package which had contained two quart bottles of poteen, but one of them had been broken in the course of transit. I wrote and thanked my lawyer friend for his kindly thought and mentioned the accident by which one of the bottles had been broken. He wrote back to this effect: "I am sorry one of the bottles was broken in the post, but as I have to-day successfully defended in court a man charged with the manufacture of this liquor, I shall be in a position to send you another bottle by the end of the week."

Perhaps it is in the heat of politics only that an English visitor comes across now and again what may be called unconscious humour—very rare among the Irish. Politics are a serious and engrossing thing to the Irishmen. I was present during part of the general election when Mr. William O'Brien with a handful of followers opposed and fought Mr. John Redmond

and the official nationalists in several contests. Mr. O'Brien had been successful in Cork and came up to his home constituency on the West coast where a great welcome had been planned for him. He was escorted to the Town Hall from which the seats had been removed and where the floor was crowded by upstanding Irishmen, young and old, many of them carrying shillelaghs. They were almost ferociously enthusiastic. Mr. O'Brien heavily bearded, with long shaggy hair, huge projecting eyebrows, stood on the platform with his hands clasped behind his back and talked to them with an intensity which matched their own fervour. One Redmondite and one only was in the hall and in the course of Mr. O'Brien's speech he ejaculated a word of dissent. The gathering was instantly in a turmoil. To my unexperienced eyes all the assembly seemed to turn on that one man at the back of the hall and to descend upon him like an avalanche. Exactly what happened to him I do not know, but he was ejected, whether whole or in pieces it was not possible to judge. Then the gathering filed back, filled the hall once more and stood at attention to listen to their idol and their orator on the platform. Mr. O'Brien with hands still clasped behind his back and looking more than ever like the prophet Elijah hissed out with a feeling impossible to reproduce in the written word, "Gentlemen, I am glad to see you know how to deal with a bully when you find one."

Ireland is presented in America and in other countries abroad as remaining oppressed, overridden, ty-

rannically governed. As a matter of fact Irish opinion is a sentimental and political one and has little or no relation to the state of affairs financial and material. Here is an extract from an article written in the last week of 1919 by an impartial visitor:

It is twenty-one years since I was last in Ireland, and all that time the remembrance of the warm-hearted country of my youth lay tucked away in my heart, as though in sweet-smelling lavender. Ireland always remained a name to conjure with, a live thing capable of vision, without which she had long since assuredly perished. I was accustomed to hear people quote Swift, and call it "a visitation" to be an Irishman; but through all these years of strife and seeming treachery I held fast to the faith that is in me, that the feet of Ireland were set, albeit by devious and ofttimes intolerable ways, on a quest for truth. *Qui cherche la verite trouvera Dieu,* and what would it matter if, in finding Him, she lost the whole world?

We had taken a little house outside a seaside village on the South Coast, and an ass cart was waiting to convey the maids, while the rest of us bicycled. The men of more or less middle age who were cracking stone by the roadside or meandering along with their carts, greeted us as of old, with a courtesy and charm vouchsafed to few mortals these latter days. But it happened to be market day; and as we neared a small market town, through which we had to pass, we found the road congested with young farmers herding their cattle. We dismounted, as they showed no inclination to let us through, and only then was I aware that we were the object of hostile looks, though no word was spoken. I turned in bewilderment to my companions and saw at once by their faces that I had not made a mistake. After this it was pleasant to get to our own village, where we met not only with courtesy, but with a certain, though restrained, friend-

liness, which later ripened into something warmer. Outside the village, in the country beyond, the older men and all the women we met invariably responded to our salutations, and at a small farm where we one day asked for some milk to drink the woman refused payment, saying, "It is our custom to give a drink of milk to any one who asks for it."

But almost as invariably the young men neither greeted us nor replied to our greetings, and I learnt to dread the black looks which often accompanied the refusal.

On looking back, two outstanding impressions remain fixed in our minds as the result of our five weeks' stay in the country—the material prosperity of the people and the spiritual isolation of Ireland in regard to all outside relationships. Not a beggar was to be seen where beggars formerly abounded. The very tinkers who live on the open road wore a leave-it-or-take-it-air of independence; while the whole countryside, as far as the eye could reach, was white unto harvest. This outward prosperity extended from the farmers to the small village shopkeepers, whose prices to the stranger within their gates were well beyond those charged in England. The fishermen, too, were reaping a fine harvest, and for the hire of small boats, when they condescended to let them out at all, they asked not less than £3 a day. It was therefore not surprising to see one or two of the younger ones parade on Sundays in immaculate blue serge suits, to the envy of the male members of our party.

One woman in the village, the wife of a labourer, living in a four-roomed cottage, supplemented her income, in addition to other activities, by providing teas for the local pleasure-seekers, who came each Sunday afternoon to the Strand, arriving in every sort of conveyance from the neighbouring town. She admitted averaging £1 profit on the takings of an afternoon—and she told us she had saved sufficient money to buy her son of sixteen a £30 outfit before sending him to Dublin to be apprenticed to the motor trade. Like-

wise the village butcher, with the air of a rich man who cared not how much he gave, cashed us a cheque for £15, revealing, as he opened his roll-topped desk to get the money, roll upon roll of banknotes lying carelessly about. Butter, eggs, meat, poultry, and milk were to be had in plenty for the paying (fine turkeys and geese were strutting all over the roads), while sugar was plentiful although ostensibly rationed.

But the dominant note that struck us—fresh in one form or the other from the horrors of the Great War and with hearts heavy at the thought of a peace that might prove to be no peace—was Ireland's obsession with herself. Her sense of proportion had vanished and there she stood in all her nakedness, self-centred, concerned alone with her own wrongs, real and fancied. It was as if the war had left her high and dry, enveloped in her private grievances and blind to the sorrows of a world in agony. "Sinn Fein," "Ourselves Alone," it is rightly called.

Above I have given some plain hard facts. There is one other fact that overrules them all. Three quarters of the Irish people are determinedly, passionately set on a change of government for themselves. Material prosperity has not dimmed their ardour. Scornfully they thrust aside the contention that they will lose money and other solid help under a new system. They decline to recognize the British law. The more violent of them plan outrages which include deliberate killings. Unsuspected policemen are shot dead. Recently an attempt was made by a band to murder General French, the Viceroy. True, some Irishmen denounce these crimes, but it is impossible to dissociate the latter from the general feeling throughout the Sinn Fein movement. Side by side with a

tacit or open approval of assassination travels a spirit of heroism. The leading Sinn Feiners face imprisonment, even the chance of death, with cheerfulness. Running like a silver thread through dark and dismal mazes is the consciousness, the exaltation of nationality. They want a revolution. They want to govern themselves. They are not at one with each other as to the methods of reaching their end, and there is some division as to exactly what that end shall be, but of the unity of spirit there can be no doubt.

Latterly the general feeling has focused itself in a demand not only for self-government, but for a government under a distinctive flag, for a republic which shall be as separate from Britain as the French Republic. England is not only willing but anxious to give Ireland Home Rule so long as it is compatible with the preservation of national unity, the continuance of the Union Jack. Under any proposed scheme there will be difficulties and arguable points. But broadly speaking, English people are strongly desirous that Irish people should accept, nay, should formulate a plan of Home Rule. England is willing to help start the new scheme not only with organization but with money grants to smooth the way if need be. The Sinn Feiners vehemently reject any proposal in advance; they want to be a sovereign people; and on the other hand the dour Unionists of Ulster do not want Home Rule at all.

The Home Rule Act of the Asquith Government had been postponed in operation for the period of the war,

and it was necessary as the formal ratification of peace approached that new proposals modifying or extending the old ones should be put forward. They are forthcoming in a plan outlined in the House of Commons just before Christmas by Mr. Lloyd George. A pregnant phrase or two by the Prime Minister gives the outline of the new suggestions.

"We propose that self-government should be conferred upon the whole of Ireland, and our plan is based on the recognition of three fundamental factors: (1) the impossibility of separating Ireland from the United Kingdom; (2) the opposition of Nationalist Ireland to British rule in Ireland; (3) the opposition of the population of North-east Ulster to Irish rule."

The framework of the new Home Rule was as follows:

Two Irish Parliaments, one for Ulster or the Unionist part of Ulster, and one for the Nationalists of Ireland. The northern Irish Parliament was to be predominantly Unionist, and the southern predominantly Nationalist.

A Council of Ireland to be composed of twenty representatives elected by each of the Irish legislatures, and this Council, with certain technical powers at the start, will be left for its ultimate functions to the two legislatures who might eventually by agreement turn it into a common parliament for the whole of Ireland.

Ireland will still have power to send forty-two members to the House of Commons in London.

The Irish legislatures will have control over education, local government, land policy, agriculture, roads and bridges, transportation including railways and

canals, old age pensions, insurance, municipal affairs, housing, local judiciary, hospitals, licensing, and all the machinery for the maintenance of law and order.

After three years the control of the police will be handed over entirely to Ireland. The Post Office, for administrative reasons will be kept in the hands of London until the two Irish Parliaments agree to ask for its transference to the Council of Ireland.

Foreign policy, Army and Navy, coinage, and the appointment of the higher judges will be reserved to London.

Within two years a joint exchequer board will settle a fair contribution of Ireland towards Imperial services, and that sum will be fixed for five years, after which period it will be open to revision.

The Imperial Government will make a grant of £1,000,000 to each of the local legislatures for the initial expenditure of setting up the machinery of government in the two areas. The British will also present to Ireland annuities at present derived from land amounting to £3,000,000 per annum. This will be a free gift.

As regards taxing powers, each Irish Parliament will have practically the powers of the State legislatures in America. The three great taxes, income tax, customs and excise, will be levied and collected imperially, and the reasons for this will be firstly expediency, and secondly a substantial guarantee for the payment of Ireland's contribution whatever it may be towards the upkeep of the national services. The Irish Parlia-

ments may levy an additional income tax if they so desire. With regard to customs and excise, it is suggested that they may pass entirely to the control of Ireland when Ireland agrees to one general Parliament. The existence of two Parliaments raises almost insuperable difficulties for the immediate transference of these matters to their hands from a central authority acting for the whole of Ireland.

This scheme put forward by the Government of Mr. Lloyd George has yet—at the moment of writing—to reach legislative form. It has already been contemptuously rejected by the Sinn Feiners. In a word they do not want the Union Jack. To this statement must be added another, that the people of England, Scotland, and Wales do not intend the Union Jack to be removed from Ireland. Ireland is an integral part of the country as a whole. It has been part of the country for centuries. Any wrongs Ireland has suffered in the past, some while since removed in substance, will be eliminated completely, and generous redress made. Complete self-government will be given within Irish borders. There can, however, be no consideration of a separate republic. Apart from sentimental reasons the safety of England is at stake, and there must be no possible foothold for a future foe at our very gates. No erroneous conclusions should be drawn from the desire to give Ireland Home Rule, nor from the placidity of English expression on the matter. Not only is there no political party in England which countenances the idea of a separate Irish republic, there is not even a

group, a handful of responsible people who will admit it to discussion. Even as the American states of the North fought for years to prevent the breaking up of the Union so the English people, not less tenacious, will fight to the limit to prevent the disintegration of this country. It is false courtesy not to point these facts out perfectly plainly and perfectly soberly to those abroad who do not know England very well and who sympathize with Ireland's emotions. No commercial pressure, no diplomatic negotiations, no kind of threat can influence this country. Here is not a question of any English government, it is a question of the English people. Any foreign country which seeks to force the hand of England and make Ireland into a separate republic can do so in one way and one way only, by declaring war on England, by conquering and crushing England on the field of battle.

Thank Heaven there is no chance of anything of the kind. But it is well for those in other lands who have to listen to the wild preaching of Irish enthusiasts that they should be told in friendliness and calmness the unavoidable culmination of real success by Sinn Fein missionaries.

CHAPTER XII

ENGLAND AND AMERICA

AMERICA and Britain stand in relations different from those which exist between any other countries. In the first place they speak the same language—which arises from the fact that it was Englishmen who colonized the strip of America from which grew the nation now one of the mighty forces. With the language there has descended much of English impulse in the affairs of life. True, in the course of years there has been a large mixture of other races, with diversions from traditional English procedures; many of the manners and tendencies in each country seem foreign to visitors crossing the Atlantic for the first time. But among what may be called the imponderable vitalizing forces behind each people there is in the last resort a common instinct. It is frequently disguised, often overlaid with surface differences, but in the great emergencies it shows forth irresistibly; and that is what we mean when we speak of Anglo-Saxon ties. The identity of language continues to strengthen the union, because, apart from the facility of intercourse in trade, politics, and the commoner things of daily life, it gives an identical medium for literature. The great writers of Britain and America have an ap-

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peal not to one country, but to two countries, and their works provide a continuous bond.

There is another platform which America and Britain share. They are beyond all doubt the two most powerful nations in the world, one in the eastern hemisphere and the other in the western hemisphere. Strong in men, money, and territory, they supply a great part of the service and goods which the other civilized nations require for their sustenance. Withdraw the shipping and manufactures of Britain and the products of America—if such a catastrophe can be imagined—and the world would be in a chaos of misery and want which no war could produce. The two countries, moreover, have potentialities of offence and defence such as cannot be equalled by any other two powers—it is to be doubted whether they could be equalled by any four powers in combination—and it is thus apparent that the relations between America and Britain, the policies of each, individually or in combination, constitute conditions which vitally affect the progress of the world. They affect all living men and women, and in addition they affect generations not yet born.

There have been misconceptions in England with regard to America, but after two and a half years' residence in the United States during the war I have come to the opinion that they are surpassed by the misconceptions of the people in that country with regard to England. England, with not a very wide or deep knowledge of the sister nation across the

Atlantic, has been inclined to overrate rather than to underrate her power. There has been a vague and misty impression in England as to the limitless resources of America, that she had myriads of men and inexhaustible supplies of money such as were at the disposal of no other nation on earth. There was something in this. Chiefly in error, however, was the take-it-for-granted belief that the Anglo-Saxon nation across the water was closely identified in a family way with England, a belief due in some measure to the identity of language, and the fact that the American nation derived its origin from English colonists. This mistake applies particularly to the people in American cities, and it is the city population in any country which finds opportunity in words and actions to represent national feeling to the world at large. There was little realization in England of what I may call the separateness of America, nor the distinctiveness, the unrelation of America to England, as to every other country. There was, moreover, no knowledge of the sensitiveness of Americans on these points. The English taken in the block are a happy-go-lucky people who are pleased to have the good opinion of outsiders, but who really do not trouble themselves very much about criticism or hostility. They are placid, secure in their own esteem, and to one who has travelled in other countries and seen the moods of other countries, amazingly tolerant of outside disapproval.

They believed America to be a new and rich country with some prejudices and peculiarities but more or less

part of the English community. That is where they made a mistake. They did not analyze American feeling. Why should they? They referred smilingly to the American accent, and talked of the great fortunes to be made in America. It was somehow part of the English world. There was no response in kind to the dislike of the English as manifested by the extreme Irish Americans and by the extreme American Americans. "Twisting the lion's tail" in Congress or elsewhere did not rouse any real resentment in the Press or in the House of Commons.

When in the heat of the trying time of war there were occasionally allusions in vaudeville to President Wilson's utterances (such as the words "too proud to fight"), they were gibes more moderate than had been directed towards an English statesman on the same stage. America even at this time was regarded as the potential saviour of the world, but there was no special reliance upon her entering the war. England was content to fight it out in the comfortable assurance that thanks largely to our fleet America was enabled to remain the great producing centre and supply store for the Allies.

I went to America at the beginning of 1917, and was amazed to find among the common people and it must be confessed also among some of the leaders, the impression that England was the severe, harsh, rasping, and suspicious critic of America. An American statesman, whose name is well-known in Europe, said to me three days after my arrival, "Is it true the English are

severely blaming us? Are they attacking us everywhere, as I hear?" I tried to put him right. That man's frame of mind was but a faint reflection of the widespread feeling among less informed people, storekeepers, clubmen, trolley-car conductors, postmen, railwaymen, and the common run of men and women. They were apparently sincerely convinced in varying degrees of England's jealousy, not to say hostility. Nothing could have been more fallacious. There was really a staggering national misunderstanding. I went to my dentist: "Ah!" he said, "you English are always knocking us, aren't you?" My American secretary said, "Now we have come into the war you English won't think so badly of us." It was really hard to get one's balance. Explanations were of no good, for they were taken as mere courteous expressions from a visitor. It is impossible to dogmatize as to how these feelings have been maintained. Something has been due to the irruption of the Irish over a generation or so, something also to the talk of renegade Britishers, who, failures in their own country, took on a new allegiance and retained bitterness towards their motherland. These people scattered throughout the country, many of them in influential local positions, helped to buttress and strengthen the diminishing prejudice left by hateful traditions about the English and German soldiers of George III. The prééminent station of England as the capital of the civilized world had some bearing on the prejudices of those who, cherishing an acquired or inherited antagonism, felt

that the might of America, with her extent of territory, population, and riches, was in some undefined way not sufficiently recognized.

Mixed motives always send a country into war. There was a vast amount of sympathy with the Allies in the United States, though by far the preponderating feeling up to the spring of 1917 was in favour of keeping out of the conflict. Some change in the attitude towards England had already been effected, for, whatever the critics might say, it had been shown that England not only was averse to war but was unprepared for war, and had through her statesmen, notably Sir Edward Grey, striven against it. That was point number one. There were still those who believed in England's perfidy, but the majority of Americans, perhaps without any enthusiasm, had come to the sober opinion that England was driven into the war for a variety of reasons, in which the rescue of Belgium and the help of France predominated. The second point was that England had not shown herself the effete worn-out nation that she was believed to be by some of those who did not live within her boundaries. The four million citizens who volunteered to fight her battles was an instance of virility presented in no other quarter. The enthusiastic loyalty of the Dominions and their offer of men and money was an instance of the vitality and oneness of British spirit which could not be overlooked by intelligent persons. The deeds on land and sea as the war progressed showed that the ancient qualities of tenacity and gallantry were still

alive in the breasts of the English. So it came to be evident that Britain, though she might be disliked and criticized, could not be regarded as played out. The Americans are judges of quality in men, and many who at first were doubtful of England swung round, with some reservations perhaps, to a new aspect regarding her. Meanwhile sympathy on behalf of the Allies steadily mounted in the United States, although a majority would have liked to keep out of the war, and a minority favoured Germany. It ought to be added that the leaders of the great political parties in America were sympathetic with the Allies. President Wilson by his declaration of war sufficiently demonstrated his attitude; one needs but to bracket with the President's name, the honoured memory of Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Choate, and to link up with the three Mr. Gompers, to indicate the currents of influence. Still I do not think the mass of the people, who, it has to be remembered, were spread over a great continent, many of them thousands of miles from the eastern seaboard, willed war simply and solely, or even principally, from sympathy with the Allied cause. Had I been an American, living all my life in the Middle West, loving my own nation, possessing the American aversion to interference in European affairs, hating war and its horrors, I should have held exactly the same opinion as that held by tens of millions of good, straightforward Americans before America entered the war.

What took America into the struggle was the fact that Germany, with surprising effrontery, ordered the

flag of America off the high seas. Any nation which would have swallowed that would have swallowed anything. Proud and sensitive America would be among the last of all countries to swallow it. There had already been injuries in the slaughter of Americans on journeys across the ocean, which had been suffered with growing anger, but when this last insulting demand came the result was not in doubt for even a period of hours. The newspapers, regardless of political division, the people, whatever their feeling towards individual nations in the alliance, came together in the common, stern, implacable demand that the Stars and Stripes should float as freely as before upon the seas. It was one of the dramatic spectacles of history to see, as I saw, a nation, well over a hundred millions strong, spring to arms and discipline practically overnight. Conscription went through Congress almost without a murmur; vast sums of money were voted; young men and middle-aged men flocked to the colours; the women of the country enlisted themselves for all kinds of services, and from that time onwards until, after many trials, tragic losses, and the expenditure of millions of money, the word Victory was trumpeted through the streets of the cities, and across the plains there was a progressive development of all the resources of the richest country on earth. Alcohol was barred from the land. Hundreds of thousands of homes voluntarily rationed themselves in food necessary for the Allies. Rich men gave up their businesses to serve their country for a dollar a year.

Doom for Germany was writ large for all who had eyes to see. But Victory was not snatched in an hour, in a month or even a year. Victory had to be organized and in that organization America inevitably came closer to England than she had ever been before. England by this time was war scarred, war experienced. The whole of England had been turned into a military machine; with factories new and old specialized and coördinated; with finance developed to meet the strain; with grass lands ploughed up to provide additional food; with restrictions on every home; indeed, with every service in the country and nearly every individual's efforts set sternly towards the one great purpose and the one great purpose only. It was a psychological result of the entry of America into the war that America should look with friendlier eyes to England than before. England at least had held the fort. Her Navy controlled the seas, her troops united with the French were keeping back the greatest military organization the world has ever known. And England was now a comrade-in-arms.

Americans were quickly across the Atlantic thrusting into plans and preparations, and Englishmen came over to America both to learn and to teach. Presently American soldiers began to stream across the Atlantic to the battlefields and a great proportion of them passed through England, hundreds of thousands making some stay there in going to and returning from France. Their letters home went all over the United States and they told of the English as they found them, and no English-

man can ask for anything better. Later these great American armies returned home and amid their shrewd quips and cranks, their witty criticisms, they were able to bear testimony as to what kind of a country it was on the other side of the Atlantic, of the strange mixture of homeliness and old fashion and thoroughness, of the reserve which melted under the strain of war and revealed kindliness and hospitality and a devotion to these knights of the west. Here then was the course of the development of new feelings between England and America. There still remained the minor exacerbations which are a sure result of relationship.

America and England are too much of a family not to feel annoyance at little things which, in strangers, would be regarded as interesting and possibly desirable irrelevances; the American likes iced water, the Englishman wants strong tea; the American likes (with very good reason) central heating; the Englishman sticks to open fires; the American looks with genial disgust at cricket; and the Englishman sees in baseball but the glorified rounders of his school days. So it goes on. But the ripples on the surface of the Hudson do not disturb its majestic progress towards the ocean.

Historians, a century hence, when the relations among the English-speaking people of the world must be closer and of a different nature than they are to-day, will be examining with meticulousness the sway of feeling between America and England during the war, and for some time after the war. A kind of critical friendliness before 1914 was replaced in the period of

mutual struggle by appreciation on both sides mingled with gratitude on the part of England. It was but to be expected that when the tension of common endeavour and common danger was over there would be a temperamental reaction. That is exactly what has happened and nothing is to be gained by blinking the fact. America steps back into what is not only a prosperous isolation but also into a remoteness from old world intrigue, and is inclined to be suspicious of England's diplomatic efforts in the peace settlement. England striving to rebuild herself after tremendous and protracted war activities sees with some bewilderment America withdrawing from the anti-war League of Nations set on foot by the American President. There has been lack of understanding of America's motives, though Lord Grey, returning from his brief tenure of the Embassy at Washington, has done much to set the matter right by his clear and statesmanlike explanation published in the "Times." One passage gives the keynote:

> In Great Britain and the Allied countries there is naturally impatience and disappointment at the delay of the United States in ratifying the Peace Treaty and the Covenant of the League of Nations. It is, perhaps, not so generally recognized here that there is also great impatience and disappointment in the United States. Nowhere is the impasse caused by the deadlock between the President and the Senate more truly regretted than in the United States, where there is a strong and even urgent desire in public opinion to see a way out of that impasse found which will be both honourable to the United States and helpful to the world.

Supplementing Lord Grey's explanation, there appears in the spring number of the *Round Table* a singularly clear exposition of the American standpoint as it appears to a cultured Englishman. The *Round Table,* it may be said, is a quarterly review with unsigned articles emanating from a little group of thinkers drawn from all parties. Here is an extract from the article I have referred to:

It is essential for a true understanding of the American attitude to the Covenant to brush aside all questions of American party politics and penetrate to the nature of popular feeling against the Covenant itself. The first element in this feeling is a wide suspicion of European diplomacy, to which much colour is lent by the proceedings of the Allies and the nature of the Treaty itself. It must be remembered that the American people are as much detached from the secular controversies of the old world as English opinion was detached from the atmosphere of Continental Europe after the Napoleonic wars. Americans detect in the Covenant of the League of Nations a subtle conspiracy to secure the support of American power and influence for the selfish aims of their European Allies, without regard for the principles on which the Covenant is ostensibly based. The sequence of events in Europe since the signature of the Peace has undeniably given much reason for this view. . . . Incidents of this kind have been inevitable in the very difficult conditions of international politics during the last few months. Their effect on American opinion is not due so much to their intrinsic importance as to the fact that they aggravate the fear of the unknown which colours the American attitude towards foreign affairs. The League of Nations has been suspected as a disguised system of alliances, to implicate the American people in ancient European feuds

which they regard as no less dangerous to peace in this new era than in the past. The average American has not lost the idealism, so eloquently expressed by President Wilson, with which he entered the war. He will be prepared in due course to make his power and influence felt in support of those principles of international dealing which are embodied in the Covenant. But he wishes to know exactly whither he is being led, and he refuses point blank to surrender his judgment and choice of action to an international council in which he feels that his representatives will long be handicapped by lack of knowledge and diplomatic experience. The denunciations levelled against him in Europe for cynical breach of faith have gone far to confirm his suspicions and to strengthen his resolve. "If," he argues, "the mere letter of the Covenant is so vehemently demanded, let me be sure what this letter implies."

This aspect of the controversy has brought out an essential difference between the British and the American mind. While the average Briton has accepted whole-heartedly the broad aims and principles of the League, he looks at its mechanism from his own empirical standpoint as a scaffolding rather than a house. "This may be a good scaffolding," he would say, "but more probably it is not. Let us make the best of it, and discover in the process how really to build the house." The average American has, on the other hand, a profoundly legalistic turn of mind. Written constitutions are the framework of his political thought. He must examine the letter of the Covenant from every side as something with a binding force equal to that of the American Constitution itself. He does not appreciate our experimental standpoint, and fears to commit himself too completely in a single step.

It has to be remembered in dealing with the relations between England and America that every country is

very self-centred and takes but a remote interest in other peoples. It is all very well for the newspaper writers and the politicians to talk at large about the interest and importance of the doings and methods of any set of foreigners; but though their statements may be perfectly accurate and may have value in influential circles, nevertheless there remains among the mass of the people the unalterable, the unshakable impression that all other countries are but a fringe. Their existence is but part of the operations of an all-seeing Providence which has provided for certain minor offices to be performed by foreigners and by foreign countries. The centre of the universe is that nation which at the moment is surveying all the other nations. A story by way of illustration is told to American audiences by Sir John Foster Fraser, who has done such excellent work on behalf of the Anglo-Saxon race as a writer and speaker on both sides of the Atlantic. "I was speaking to an attractive girl in one of the Western States," he says, "and explaining to her how every country was all-important in its own eyes. 'Now you think the United States is the greatest country on earth. Well, I was once travelling in China and I saw a map of the world drawn according to Chinese notions. China was represented as a great country covering the major part of the globe, India was a little spot to the southwest, Europe a tiny spot still farther west, the British Isles mere specks, and would you believe it, the United States did not appear at all on that map of the world.' The American girl was so angry that she snatched from

my hand the piece of paper on which I had been illustrating the Chinese map and tore it to pieces. She was very angry with me. But I had my revenge." Sir John would pause here. "I married her."

How does America now appear in the eyes of the common people of England? For good or bad, that is more important than her aspect to politicians, diplomats, and administrators. The common people of England, though they have had a shock in America's withdrawal from the League of Nations' project, are still in some degree under the illusion that the two nations think pretty much alike on all kinds of things, and especially on the smaller matters of daily life. This belief is likely to produce shocks as differences of opinion and method are occasionally made evident in international discussions. The English public know that America took a powerful part in securing victory, and are permanently grateful, but they do not think that "America won the war" any more than they claim that "England won the war." The matter is never seriously discussed because the record of the efforts, achievements, and losses of France, America, England, and every other country is looked upon as speaking for itself.

The preëminence in money of the United States is brought home to every family by the adverse exchange which puts up the price of bread, bacon, and many other commodities, and there is full realization that for a period of years, until Russia can be developed, and until some of the British Dominions can greatly extend

their output, America will be for Europe the principal supply depot of food and of greatly needed raw materials. There is meanwhile not the slightest national jealousy of America. English self-respect, self-sufficiency, call it what you will, is amply maintained by the fact that the war has made her more powerful than ever in Europe, her moral and material influence being naturally increased by America's tendency to withdraw from coöperation in international affairs in the eastern hemisphere. Among the public there is mild surprise at American suspicion of our motives, in respect for instance of the League of Nations. The ordinary Englishman, not deficient when it comes to the necessity for fighting, is not a nervous or belligerent individual, is opposed in the grain to militarism, and loves a quiet life. He is at present sick of war. He did not go deeply into the machinery of the League of Nations but became possessed of a deep gratitude for the institution of a process to keep away wars in the future. That he should be suspected of using the proposed League of Nations for English aggrandizement or intrigue gives him a little shock, a touch of cynical amusement. The practical analysis of the League by Americans and the conclusions they form just makes him shrug his shoulders good-humouredly and say, "Have it as you will!" The world is not so idealistic as it looked to be during the war, that is all.

There is much popularity in England for Americans of all grades. Before the war there was a pretty general notion that Americans had an exaggerated assertive-

ness, and a habit of blowing loudly their own trumpet. The American soldiers and sailors who have been domiciled in England or have passed through it have swept away that idea. Of course, there are exceptions here and there, but the majority, practically all, of the young American fighters have impressed the common folk of England not only with their keenness of mind, and freshness of outlook, but with their un-assumption, their desire to learn new things, and their deep appreciation of little kindnesses. Whenever I hear a harsh word on the personal side about Americans I make a point of finding out whether the speaker has ever been at close quarters with either men or women from the other side. In nine cases out of ten he has never exchanged a word with an American. From officers and men at the front there is an unbroken chorus of admiration and affection for the American fighters with whom they were associated. I hear that depreciatory comments about the English have been circulated by American soldiers at home; I am certain that these commentators like the English detractors never had touch at all with their brothers-in-arms.

We have been fortunate for many years in the official representatives of America. I know from personal knowledge how much the high capacity and charming individuality of men like Mr. Choate, Mr. Whitelaw Reid, Mr. Page, and now, Mr. Davis have contributed towards good understanding not only between the two governments but between the two peoples. The work of an ambassador lives long after his term of office is

over. We have sent of our best to America also, Lord Bryce, Lord Reading, and Lord Grey being recent examples. Where the United States gives us a lead which we might well follow is in the subordinate officials she commissions for work abroad. They are efficient, courteous, broad-minded and it is a real pleasure to do business with them. England, owing to the retention of her caste system, frequently sends to foreign lands in subordinate but important offices the bumptious, affected, "haw-haw" type of well-connected person who is not only unfitted for his particular job, but provides the foreigner with an entirely erroneous impression of the typical Englishman. Our social gradings are not without advantages; here is one of their serious drawbacks. And just now this particular kind of man is not only an inconvenience; he is a danger.

In all the talk about and between America and England there are misconceptions on both sides arising from causes which are ineradicable. It is probably accurate to say that for one Englishman who is antagonistic to America, there are twenty Americans who are antagonistic to England, and yet that statement by itself would give a false picture of the two nations. The Sinn Feiners, pro-Germans, and others who specially hate England are principally massed in the cities and they find opportunities for expression which are neither sought for nor obtained by great numbers of well-informed and balanced Americans. They are unrepresentative also of the rural population (amounting, be it remembered, to fifty per cent., more than the

entire list of persons in the British Isles). I, an ordinary country-bred Englishman, never felt so happy or so much at home as I did among the villages and small towns of Vermont, Ohio, and Missouri. There was something apart from, and in addition to, the all-pervading self-conscious Americanism. The farming folk were amazingly like the country people of Kent and Worcestershire, Hampshire and Devon. I felt the currents of common feeling in a happy rush. I like to think that in this similarity of spirit and outlook resides the future of the world. Difficulties and perils may lie athwart the intermingled endeavours of America and England in the years just ahead of us. I believe they will be happily conquered, not so much by the efforts of brilliant individuals as by the impulses of that silent, direct-thinking, clean living body of men and women who make up the bulk of population on each side, and have in their secret keeping the heart of the country.

CHAPTER XIII

ENGLAND AND THE OTHER NATIONS

WHAT is England's position henceforth in the family web of Europe? How does she stand with her Allies, France and Italy and her late enemy, Germany? What is to be the attitude presently of resuscitated Russia? Do the neutrals believe her more powerful or less powerful than before the war? The answer to these and related questions will automatically leave their mark on history. The philosopher-historian of the future will be able to present with a clearness impossible at present the twin view of England, pre-war and past war, as she is regarded with less or with more affection and respect, as capable of greater or smaller material assistance and coöperation with the other nations of Europe. It will be possible, too, in those distant times ahead to examine in due proportion the influence on Europe after the war of English motives as a whole, motives which may as likely as not remould England herself while reaching far beyond the boundaries of her shores.

In nations, as in men and women, temperament and emotions, whether recognized or not, are partly responsible for material ambitions and material achieve-

ments. Feelings in a people may be undefined and hazy, but when they are long continued, arising from inexpungable causes, such for instance as that of race, they produce a tendency to policy, and, presently, policy itself. It is not always the big things that matter. Traits which in themselves are neither particularly good nor particularly bad, attract or repel, just as a manner of speech, a trick of carriage, a live blue eye make their impressions, favourable or otherwise, between different human beings. Of course there are wider influences too, a record for unbroken faith, a proved capacity for loyal action, a preference long persisted in for a special mode of government, a consistent attitude of mind on social questions—these facts produce a big and steady volume of appreciation, maybe. But seek as you will for explanations there remain as a lighthouse in international relationships a current of emotion, faint or strong, sometimes partly based on self-interest, often enough dependent on elements which cannot be analyzed.

These considerations have a bearing on how England and the other nations stand towards each other, now that the war is over. They do not, however, represent the whole situation. Motives of self-preservation sometimes stifle strongly directed impulses. Selfishness, in the sense of safety and prosperity, is inalienably associated with a healthy nation—and it sometimes happens that this same selfishness is in the long run helpful and not hurtful to outsiders. It is not inevitably so.

On the whole England's progress and power have reacted for the advantage of other nations, though it would be inaccurate to state that she has had any altruistic policy of benefiting other peoples at the expense of her own. This at least may be said that she has gladly recognized that in her prosperity she may be doing good to others. It is a negative kind of virtue and perhaps the statement of it does not go far enough. Let it, however, be said with as much definiteness as possible that England is a peace country, confident in her strength but hating war, the last to take offence, the most diligent in refraining from offence to others. Truly may this be attributed to temperament, for where is there now the hater of England who can say she lacks courage, energy, and capacity in the face of a foe? There is no military aggressiveness among the people of England. And whatever the defects of our methods of government the people of England do in fact—though occasionally at somewhat long range—rule the Parliament at Westminster. At the same time we should not occupy the position in the world which we hold to-day if the initiative and thoroughness which mark us did not radiate far beyond this little group of islands in the North Atlantic. Here is where we are bound to touch other nations. As people who had to work hard for a living the English have been keenly alive to the possibilities of business and have extended and developed their markets in the world. They have benefited themselves; but they have also benefited others who wished to exchange goods or to

purchase necessary commodities. They have, moreover, helped those who had goods for disposal, and lacked the means of transmitting them, and were glad to take advantage of the shipping capacity of England. England was not averse to abstracting a moderate profit in shipping the goods in question. It has happened that the far-reaching network of business constructed by England has been strengthened and amplified by the fact—who will deny it?—that by instinct and temperament the Anglo-Saxon is on the whole a straight man—despite exceptions here and there. The quality of British goods has been preëminent, the word of the British dealer his bond, the promise of the British financier as good as cash. These facts may or may not have put England on the side of the angels, but they certainly have been an asset in business. And so it has come about that various countries, sometimes a little suspicious, touched now and again by jealousy have been, generally speaking, well disposed to England. It is not too much to say that the older countries —eliminating Germany for the moment—had both respect and admiration for her, and at the same time found it to their advantage to be on friendly terms. On the other side of the account was the fact that England, though with a very small army, had an extremely powerful navy, and, surrounded by water, was in a good position to repel attack, was indeed very nearly invulnerable. Even the best of friends may have their friendliness deepened by such a set of circumstances.

Here, then, before the war was the picture, England powerful but pacific, with a fabric of world commerce which was of advantage not only to herself but to most other countries also. She certainly stood high among the European nations. On cordial terms with most of her neighbours, she was regarded with friendly eyes by nearly all, and while any who disliked her dared not say so, friends were proud of their friendship. Has Europe's convulsion in war, with its after effects, changed the relative position of England? Is she judged as serviceable to other nations as in the past? Is she less liked? Is she less feared? An answer in some detail has to be given to these questions, and it is necessary to take a glimpse at what may be styled the general national feeling of the other countries towards England. For instance, what of France, bound to her ally by the tie of neither race nor language? A gust of gratitude and affection swept France when England made the fateful decision to enter the war, and throughout the chequered drama a loyal warmth and kindliness has never failed. That does not mean there were no little troubles. Partners cannot run a commercial undertaking without occasional disagreements, and war is a huge business with tragedy for profit and loss. Of occasional divergences at headquarters we have heard something more than rumours, but these rifts small or large, only give emphasis to the successful coöperation between the English and French in the campaign as a whole. Dangers to France, dangers to England, naturally produced acutely different viewpoints as to

the best course of action from time to time, and yet in the result the two armies may be regarded as having worked as one coördinated machine. There was a hitch occasionally, sometimes what looked like a partial breakdown, but nothing other than might be expected in a vast and complex organism under severe and lengthy strain. At periods there would be popular grumbles in France that England was not performing her share, and then in England rumblings and mutterings that England was doing all the fighting, but it was not the expression of these discontents but their ephemeral nature which will be one of the features of the war for observers in the future. The seal of agreement and the sign of victory was the acquiescence of England in Marshal Foch as Commander-in-Chief of the Allied armies. England is not without her pride, and with millions of her men in the field it says something not only for her trust in France but also for her affection for that country, that she put her armies under a Frenchman with confidence and willingness. On the political side of affairs there was unbroken smoothness. It is too much to suppose that there was always an absolute and itemized agreement, but on general policy there was never a hint of a break, and the personal relations between the leading French and British statesmen were not only conventionally cordial but frank with the friendliness of real intimacy. There is one other aspect which has to be noted. For years multitudes of young Englishmen were on the soil of France mixing not only with French fighters, but with the general French popula-

tion, the people in the towns and in the villages of the countryside. In the height of the war there could not have been less than a million Anglo-French friendships in operation. Pretty well all of them were pleasant, the great bulk were delightful. "Tommy" brings back with him to England unbreakable memories of civilian sufferings patiently borne, of tiny kindnesses innumerable, and the French for a generation will talk about the thick-set well-fed, somewhat ungraceful British soldier who fed the chickens in the morning, drew water from the well, hung the family linen on the line, and sometimes amused the baby, the British soldier who with his half dozen bungling words of French and his mingled boisterousness and reserve left as his legacy a sense of homely gentleness. It is hard to give even an idea of the sweet gratitude of these humble French people. My brother, a young officer in an infantry regiment taking part in the driving back of the Germans, found accommodation one night in a cottage of a village where the Germans had been in occupation. The old French couple who lived there, on the verge of destitution, could not of course do very much for him, but when at night with a stump of candle he sat down to write a message they unearthed from a secret hiding place the sole remnant of their possessions, two old silver candle sticks, and put one on each side of him as the only compliment they could pay to this British soldier.

I heard Mr. J. H. Thomas, the Labour leader, describe how during the spring of 1917, going over one of the battlefields he found two or three French children

putting wild flowers they had gathered on the unmarked graves of some Scottish soldiers. Mr. Thomas learned that the children had seen that by some accident these graves were without the usual little wooden crosses, and they picked the flowers and placed them on the graves to show the dead soldiers they were not unthought of! These incidents and tens of thousands like them will live long in the hearts of the common people of France and England—whatever the politicians may do.

In the remoulding of Europe there will possibly be different orientations of France and Britain, and of these I will say a word presently. On the practical side of affairs it is realized in England that France stands in the pass for freedom. Mutual interests of the two countries are so interlocked that any serious quarrel between them is unthinkable, and with this has to be taken the fact that only from the coast of France could any real descent on our shores be made. That was among the reasons the Germans were so anxious to get Calais and Boulogne. France then is one of the bulwarks for England. On the other hand the powerful British fleet, and the British interests in trade or in territory over the globe make England an invaluable ally. The devastated cities and provinces of France call urgently for the products of British factories. These are but samples of the material links between the two countries. At least as strong are the intensified feelings of the peoples, for whereas the English realize as never before the superb gallantry, the matchless military genius, and the unbreakable

oneness of the French people in the face of danger, the French on their part see in us a nation slower in conception, but unshakable in faith, and, though injured in the war, far and away stronger for defence and for commerce than any other power in Europe. We think the French volatile, they think us a little slow. But each knows the deep strength of the other, though a smile at the smaller differences in day to day life may be permitted on either side.

It is the fashion to assume a kind of contempt for Germany's opinion of other nations now, and to imply that Germany does not count from henceforth. Whether it be pleasant or unpleasant the fact remains that the fate of Germany means a tremendous lot in the future life of Europe, in the life of the world. However strong your dislike you cannot wipe out a well organized, highly productive nation of seventy millions from calculations in respect of a reconstructed world. The Germans are a thoroughly conquered people, there is no doubt of that, suffering as they deserve to suffer from acute humiliation as well as from all kinds of impoverishment. Never again in our time will they raise their head in a military sense. But the people remain, their natural products remain, their spirit of organization remains, and the broken fabric of their commercial life will assuredly be repaired. That is Germany as she is to-day, enduring the contumely which she has earned. The weakest among us can generate scorn for the defeated, and broken Germany looks over the globe in vain for a stalwart friend amid neutrals as well as

those who were recently belligerents. In one place, and one place only, does she perceive the gleam of hope, and that place is England. Why blink the fact? England is the clearing-house of the world for trade, and trade must be the means of Germany's resuscitation from poverty. England, moreover, depends for her own prosperity on the prosperity of other nations, and a revitalized Germany will tend to improve conditions through all the lands of Europe—apart from mutually profitable intercourse between Germany and England direct. Will the feelings engendered by the war long delay business operations? It is unlikely. We are a practical people. We are, moreover, not malicious in the grain, and having beaten the enemy and safeguarded the future we find no delight in any deliberated and persistent revenge. What then is happening? There is a growing and powerful opinion in England that the Peace Treaty must be modified, not only for the purpose of allowing Germany the more quickly to discharge the obligations imposed on her, but also to give her the means of contributing to the improvement of conditions in Europe generally. A book entitled "The Economic Consequences of the Peace," written by Mr. John Maynard Keynes, who to the middle of 1919 represented the British Treasury at the Paris Peace Conference, violently assails the Treaty as oppressive. He argues pungently for relaxations. This, be it noted, is an Englishman, a man of some responsibility. Mr. Asquith, just reëlected to Parliament, where he takes his place as leader of the

Opposition, and a potential Prime Minister, endorses the plea for a revision of the Treaty, and gives some countenance to a suggested wholesale reduction of the indemnity figures. Mr. Asquith is a moderate man, and a man of weight and experience in international affairs. He represents a great body of influential and popular opinion. Another who may not go quite so far, but would certainly travel along the same lines is Lord Robert Cecil, not a Liberal like Mr. Asquith, but a Conservative, and one who is frequently spoken of as a coming Prime Minister. No wonder Germany looks with hope to England, which while the strongest is apparently also in some respects the least embittered of her late European enemies.

While this tendency is manifesting itself in England, France argues that modification towards Germany is called for by neither expediency nor justice. "Weakening" on the part of England is deplored. It is a clear dividing line, and yet such are the general relations between France and England that accommodation between them on this as on other matters is assured. France has suffered unspeakable horrors. France is at the post of danger. What she says on this vital matter cannot be passed over. Probably the course of events will bring lessons for a joint decision.

Though not so much in the public eye, the feelings towards England of the other European countries are of importance. Italy has been, and still remains, an active friend of England. True, there has been an almost painful anxiety that this country should take

the Italian view of the Fiume business, and some criticism that we have not strongly urged Italy's claims, but this is only an incident. Ever since Italy was unified there has been a good deal more than an official affection between the two countries. Nobly Italy came to the assistance of humanity in the great struggle, and her chivalry will always be remembered, as well as her great contribution to the joint victory. By money and manufactures England can help Italy extensively, and there can be hardly any doubt that mutual coöperation will go on in the future, perhaps even to a larger degree than in the past.

What of Russia? Who can give a really informative opinion as to what present-day Russia thinks of any other country? The Soviet Government, while prepared for compromise on the question of commercial intercourse and presumably diplomatic intercourse also, has declared political war on the governmental systems of all the great powers. Possibly the Soviet Government represents the largest individual fraction among the human population of one hundred and eighty millions, but exactly how large that fraction is, how representative it is, no foreigner can say. It may be hazarded that that mass of human beings has but the vaguest notion of the thoughts, impulses, and systems of the outside world. England is no doubt preached about as "capitalistic" like all the other Powers. This much, however, may be stated, that before the war England, fifteen hundred miles distant on the map and five hundred years forward in social development, was

regarded by liberal thought in Russia as a paradise of political liberty. I heard those exact words at a meeting of municipal chiefs in Petersburg in 1912. In the other great cities I visited I found a similar exaggerated appreciation, and it was not confined to the politicians and literary men. At Moscow I went to a popular music hall where one of the performers was billed as an "English dancer," and when her number appeared she was applauded in advance and her appearance on the stage carried a little tumult of welcome. That she spoke French with a German accent and danced abominably did not in the least check the storm of cheers which rewarded her endeavours. It was enough that she was "English." I have the impression that when revolutionary methods have run their course and a settled form of government is in operation, England will stand at least as good a chance of Russian goodwill as any other country, possibly a little better than most.

Holland during the war, sandwiched between Germany on the one side and the North Sea controlled by the British on the other, possessing a big trade with each country, had the most delicate position of any neutral. She demonstrated the amplest correctitude and showed no favours. Now that England is on top she naturally is glad she did nothing to offend one of the principal victors. A passive but pervading friendliness which stops short of effusiveness is perhaps a fair description of Holland's feeling to England. Then there is Denmark near at hand. A large majority of the Danes favoured the Allies during the war, and that meant

favouring England, for when I was in Copenhagen in 1916 the contest was invariably spoken of as one between England and Germany. While most of the Danes wanted England to win they were naturally against announcing the fact, for Germany could have blown Copenhagen out of existence in twenty-four hours by her warships, and overrun her from the landward side in three days. The links of open friendship with England are again displayed in the sight of all.

Norway was openly and determinedly staunch to England before the war and during the war. A deep self-respecting friendship persists among the Norsemen, who in race and temperament are definitely affiliated with the English. Germany ruthlessly and continuously sank Norwegian ships, but there was never a lack of Norwegian vessels or Norwegian sailors for the dangerous expeditions so necessary for Allied supplies. Not full justice has yet been done to the heroism of these Norsemen. They fiercely criticized England for some of the trading restrictions, but there was always burning a flame of admiration for her part in the war. Independence is in the soul of these people, who despite their continuance of monarchical government, are probably the most democratic nation on the face of the earth. Kindliness, graciousness, mark their manners and their thoughts, but they permit neither friends nor enemies to domineer. How utterly impossible it was for the Germans to understand them! Just before I reached Christiania the German Minister had sent round a communication to editors of some of the papers

that he would like them to call and see him. A reply went back from the editors giving the hour at which they were open to receive visitors at their offices each day. One of my pleasantest recollections is of a lively lengthy talk with the Prime Minister, Mr. Knudsen, a simple-mannered, keen-minded frank statesman, whose office was as easy of access as that of any business man.

Sweden on the official side was pro-German. The King's wife was a German. The army was trained on the German model. A vast quantity of business was constantly transacted between the two countries. Labour, it is true, led by Mr. Branting, favoured England's side, but official commercial and army circles all wanted Germany to win. There was no special animosity to England, indeed as an Englishman visiting Stockholm I found extended to me in investigation a helpful courtesy which went far beyond the bounds of formality. Sweden, unlike Norway, is an aristocratic country, with a proud history, and England's ancient lineage appeals to her even though in the war she looked with sympathy on Germany's cause, not that there was any departure from proper neutral behaviour, for no country could be more punctilious. Now that the fight is over Sweden is not likely to depart from her respect for this country. Swedes are liked in England. Englishmen in Sweden receive impressions not only of a beautiful land but of a cultured and fascinating people. It is extremely unlikely that Sweden and England will ever come to loggerheads.

Here then is Europe's attitude to England, and England's attitude to Europe. Trials and dangers beset the whole continent. In the midst of them England to foreigners looks bigger and stronger than she did before the war.

CHAPTER XIV

BRITAIN OVERSEAS

IT puzzles and exasperates the enemies of England, open or covert, that the Overseas Dominions of the British Empire show not only loyalty, but enthusiasm for the Mother Country. There is sometimes an endeavour to ignore the fact, to slur it over, and in emergencies to explain it away. England, it is pointed out, has a black record, greedy, acquisitive, hypocritical. She pretends to go to a foreign undeveloped land for the sake of that land, for the sake of the people there, and ends by seizing everything in sight. Sometimes she covers up her misdeeds, but at other times they are obvious to the world, as for instance, oppressed Ireland, misruled Egypt, and militaristic caste-governed India. The critics go on to say that the Dominions, Canada for example, or Australia, are just waiting the opportunity to break away and become entirely separate nations on their own account. Look at the selfishness of England in the great war! The sense of duty which impelled the outlying parts of the British Empire to send their men and give their treasure for the sake of the common cause was exploited by the English; they used the gallantry of Dominion troops to save the English troops. When

there was a hot corner it was the Australians or the Canadians or the New Zealanders as the case may be who were given the post of honour and the post of danger. Look at the casualties, they tell the tale! And when all this and much more that is stupid and false has been said, the speaker will assure you that he is not hostile to England; that he is only pointing out historical facts which have to be borne in mind by all those who desire an impartial view of world history!

The first feeling of the Englishman abroad on hearing these things is one of bewilderment. He is not indignant, he realizes that he is in the presence of a new and strange mentality—a mentality which, whatever has been his experience of argument or battle on principle, he has never before encountered. It staggers him. He has to struggle to get his balance. He has the same kind of feeling that he would have in meeting a man from the moon.

The average Englishman has warm appreciation and pride in the fact that great national communities scattered over the earth, peopled by those of his own race, powerful entities in themselves, are part and parcel of the British Empire, and have the same pulse-beats as himself with regard to the Motherland. The British Empire covers a quarter of the earth's surface, and comprises nearly a quarter of the earth's population, including 60,000,000 or 70,000,000 of Anglo-Saxon people. The bonds of Empire so far as the Dominions and mother country are concerned have been at once strengthened and loosened by the war.

LATIVE LIB

There has been an intensification of feeling arising from loyalty and affection towards the old country, and at the same time there has been a development of what may be called nationality in the various constituent parts of the Empire. Their provision of money and men in the great struggle, the achievements of the separate Dominions in their own sphere of fighting, the fame that each secured on its own, all helped towards the development of individuality. It may be asked whether all these facts taken together do not indicate a process of disintegration and development towards complete separation. Is it conceivable that these distinct parts of the earth should continue to owe allegiance and to manifest affection for the small group of islands in the North Atlantic whose flag at present floats above them? Is not the natural tendency as shown by history towards separation instead of closer unity? No man can answer that definitely, but there are some general indications which are worth while taking into account. The British Empire is a loosely woven web covering a great part of the surface of the earth. It is not the strength of that web in any particular part, but the texture of which it is composed, and the way in which it is woven together which make for permanence or the reverse. One of the ruling considerations is the way the British Empire came into existence. It arose hardly at all from warlike conquest; it came to be because of a certain independence, obstinacy, mingled with a spirit of adventure in the British race. From various causes, each of them having some-

thing common at the root, Englishmen, Irishmen, Scotsmen, and Welshmen trickled out to various parts of the world, and by certain inherent qualities, certain positive traits which need not be regarded as in all cases marked by virtue, they set out and achieved dominance both in narrow little circles and spheres which were widened as the years went on. Here and there was fighting. Nearly everywhere was trading. Courage went with a touch of acquisitiveness, and quiet but persistent domination with a spirit of fair play towards the natives of far countries. There was no conscious exercise of righteousness, nor any special assumption of God-given powers, only an unexplainable instinct, for doing on the whole the right and level thing. Indefensible acts were committed, oppressions were not unknown; land was seized without warrant. And yet these things were but the smaller incidentals. Pervading the general activities in many lands and over many generations there ran a spirit which it is difficult to describe in a phrase, but which was roughly that of law and justice. Stevenson says somewhere that all men being imperfect there are inevitable diversions from the path of rectitude, but that in the decent and higher minded man these diversions are like the accidental shifting of the magnetic needle on a compass which may sometimes be forced away from the north but which always comes back to the proper point and its normal position. It was the virile adventurers in India, Australia, Africa, on the American continent, that at varying periods of history established the Anglo-

Saxon domination. In the course of long years political complexities arose, and many changes, some good, some bad, were brought into effect, but still throughout the whole of the drama there ran that motive force arising from character not developed in words or creed, but springing from men's hearts.

The general position of the Empire may be sketched in a sentence or two. In Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa the scope of self-government has been developed to the extent that within their own boundaries the people govern themselves by representatives locally elected. The principal government departments are administered by the political chief responsible to the elected legislature. The two main links so far as visible organization is concerned with England are the maintenance of a Governor-General and the existence of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London which is the supreme law authority of the Empire to which cases in the last resort are brought from all the outlying Dominions.

Restrictions still exist of a formal nature, but in practice they are not acted upon. For instance all the British Dominions are subject, except as regards taxation, to the legislation of the British Parliament, but no Act of Parliament affects a Dominion unless that Dominion is specially mentioned, and Dominion legislatures may be controlled by the refusal of the Governor's assent to any measure passed. It would be a very bold as well as a stupid Governor who refused assent. His position is very much the same in this

respect as the monarch in England itself. With regard to these Dominions it should be said quite bluntly that if they want to separate from the Empire and become republics or kingdoms on their own account, there would be nothing to stop them. Democratic England is as the poles asunder from the tyrannically ruled England of George III's time. We shall never send an army to try to compel the allegiance of any Dominion that does not wish to give a free allegiance. It would be useless if we did, which is perhaps a more potent argument than the fact that we should be wrong. Canada could be a separate country to-morrow, so could Australia, so could any of the others. In that fact alone one may perhaps find a reason why they remain so closely attached to Britain, and why they are likely to remain so for the future.

There are some classes of British possessions, however, outside the self-governing Dominions. Of these India is the principal. A Minister for India sits in the British Cabinet and is responsible to Parliament for that country. He appoints a council in India which governs it, there being a Governor General who with assistance and Councillors has wide power. Of recent years there has been a steady development of the policy of admitting native Indians to a share in governing. There are legislative councils in the various districts. Business in India is conducted by departments, each of which is under the care of a member of the Supreme Council who has authority to deal with affairs of a minor importance and to select what is worthy for the consideration

of the Governor General and his council. Local self-government is one of the products of British rule. The municipalities in 1916 numbered seven hundred and thirteen, controlling a population of 17,000,000, regulating local services such as water, lighting, etc. and imposing necessary taxes. Out of 9,793 members of municipal bodies, 8,812 were Indians.

Among the countries constituting the British Empire, India comes second to the United Kingdom itself in the volume of its sea-borne trade, which almost equals that of Canada and Australia combined. During the five years ending 1913–1914 imports and exports were twice as great as they were twenty-five years before. The ordinary course of Indian trade yearly shows a large export of merchandise and an import of treasure. In the year ending 1917 the total private merchandise exported was £162,031,000, and imports of private merchandise were £99,748,000. Total imports were £131,982,000, and total exports £166,311,000.

What are the kinds of things the world, especially the British Empire, gets from India? Here are some of them: jute, cotton, rice, tea, hides and skins, cotton manufactures, rubber, hemp, manganese ore, spices, coffee. She buys, in the shape of imports, machinery, mineral ores, iron and steel, automobiles and cycles, chemicals, railway material, and other metals in addition to iron and steel.

Apart from the self-governing Dominions and India, there are British possessions which are governed by

legislative assemblies solely or partly elected, and an executive council nominated by the British authorities, technically by the Crown. In this class are the Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, British Guiana, Jamaica, the Leeward Islands, Mauritius, and Malta.

There are other places where the executive and legislative council is nominated entirely by the Crown, and these places include Ceylon, the Falkland Islands, Fiji, Gambia, St. Vincent, Sierra Leone, the Straits Settlements, and Trinidad. In addition to these classes of colonies lands called protectorates have their foreign relations under the executive control of the English Government, and there are also "spheres of influence" which may be described as areas wherein other Powers undertake not to attempt to acquire influence or territory by treaty or annexation.

Egypt is a British protectorate. Here there is a Council of Ministers with a President who acts as Prime Minister. The British Financial Adviser attends the meeting of the Council but has no vote. Justice is administered under four distinct systems, all except the Consular Courts being supervised by the Ministry of Justice to which a British Judicial Adviser is attached. If you look through the heads of the Government departments you will find British names alternating with those of native Egyptians.

What is the general position of England and the Dominions now? I find not the slightest indication that any one of the Dominions want what foreigners call freedom, but what they would call separation. They

wish, of course, to lead their own life; they are just as jealous of their own prerogatives in governing as is possible for any separate nation to be. In South Africa Boer statesmen have already pointed out with complete truth that that Dominion governs itself just as much as if it were not a part of the British Empire. There you have the essence of the matter. Any one of the Dominions could get separation from this country whenever it liked, and find itself under a separate flag, but with not a particle more of freedom than it possesses at present, and at the same time they would be deprived of the measure of safety afforded to them by the British fleet and of the measure of prosperity which is inherent in the fact that they are part and parcel of the British Empire with vast commercial ramifications over the whole of the world. What is there to be gained by separation? The all important fact of independence, outsiders may reply. It is not always material considerations which guide the biggest decisions in life. There are some things more important than commercial prosperity or personal safety. To stand alone, self-respecting, comparatively weak, but tied to no one, with no bonds however light, is something to be striven for as one of the transcendent objects of life. Think of the Canadian flag, or the Australian flag, or the New Zealand flag, or the South African flag, what an inspiration each would be! This is an appeal to sentiment well founded in theory; it ignores a very important fact which is never realized by people from outside unless they have lived in Eng-

land for a time or spent some period in the British Dominions. The important fact is this, that it is indeed sentiment and not any material consideration which provides the principal reason for the continued adherence of the Dominions to the British Crown. They would be losing and not gaining an ideal by separating themselves. This is a hard and unpalatable fact to those critics of England who behind impartial words retain suspicion and latent hostility. One is talking in terms into which they cannot enter when one refers to the affection of the Dominions for the Homeland, its institutions and its history. It is amazing to those commenting foreigners that there should be devotion to the ideal of monarchy in these new and vibrant lands whose very breath is freedom and who are farther removed from the idea of subjection probably than any of the older countries of the earth who have a flag of their own. If one could divorce oneself from patriotic affection it would I think be said with emphasis that ancient France is the best place in the world for a home for those belonging to the Latin races, and that ancient England is by far the happiest residing place for those of the Anglo-Saxon and kindred races. An English country life in comfortable circumstances is the ideal for millions of individuals, some in the great cities, some scattered over the globe. The hedges, and the cricket fields, and the wayside country inns, and the great elms, the rolling downs, and the chalk cliffs, the speech of the natives, with phrases still reminiscent of Elizabeth's time, all these things are rich with history,

rich with the softness of old associations. There are other fascinations. London is certainly the capital of Europe and in many respects the capital of the world. Its geographical position and the trend of circumstances through centuries has made it a central market of the world, and also the meeting place of intellectual effort for all the countries. It provides a sphere of work for great artists, is the abiding place of literary giants, and the rendezvous for the rulers of the world in politics, in science, in business and in invention. Here is situated the mother of Parliaments, the symbol and image of free government for all civilization. The imaginative and cultured man or woman may mirror the ages by spending a week in London. Roman roads, the mark of our first touch of civilization 2,000 years ago, still run through the British metropolis. You may still visit the hostelry and traverse the streets made famous by Chaucer when he set out to Canterbury centuries ago. A brass plate marks the spot in Westminster Hall where Charles the First stood to be sentenced to death by stern upholders of British Liberty. In the British Museum is an accumulated wealth of mementoes and knowledge, visited by the savants of every race and clime.

There are anachronisms and many stupid methods here as in every great capital. There are stupid and cruel people as well as good and clever people. In some departments of life there is exhibited a backwardness which annoys visitors who are blind to objections in their own national life. But taking London all in all

it is the city of all cities which radiates in a thousand directions the lessons of the centuries, the activities derived from ancient history, and the constant striving of a great collective human organism for the better expression of life.

There is much jostling for money, but money is not the supreme aim for most. Many a wealthy man would spend a fortune if without trouble he might have the letters "M. P." after his name. In a word London is richer in interest than any other individual city. The clubs are more interesting, the sights are more interesting, and be it added that the people are more interesting, because they touch life on a greater number of sides. Is it a surprising fact that those in far away Dominions under the British flag regard London as their mother city and England as their home? Is it surprising that they feel the touch of glamour at having a monarch, the latest of a long line in continuous succession, providing an unbroken chain with the England of the past? There is pride in it as well as affection. Old England with all her defects and drawbacks, sometimes indeed because of them, is a land to be proud of as well as to love.

Mr. Lloyd George in toasting the Prince of Wales on his return from Canada and America put the position clearly:

> The Throne means a great deal to this country. It means even more to the Empire. It is the one institution that unites us. Throughout all climes, through all continents there is no institution—Parliament, laws, ecclesiastical

organizations, not even language—of which it can be said that it is common to the whole Empire. But the Throne unites them all. Therefore, the visit of the heir to the Throne to any part of the Empire has a significance of its own. And it was opportune. The British Empire is a peculiar institution. Not only is there nothing like it; there never has been anything like it. It is united by no force, it is not even united by ties of blood, for you have a multitude of races all of them owing a common loyalty to the Throne, and displaying it conspicuously in the hour of peril.

Take the Dominions. They sent to our aid over a million gallant men in the late war. Not one of them came from any order that was issued or could have been issued from this country. They came out of loyalty, out of a mutual feeling of kinship, of interest in the Empire and of the great aims for which the Empire was fighting. India sent us over a million of men. They came from no compulsion, they came from loyalty to the Throne. It is the greatest alliance of nations, the truest and most tried alliance of nations in the world to-day—the British Empire.

Then the Prince made a common sense statement:

The old idea of Empire handed down from Greece and Rome was that of a mother country surrounded by daughter states which owed allegiance to her. Now, we Britishers have left that obsolete idea behind a long time ago. Our Empire implies a partnership of free nations, nations living under the same system of law, pursuing the same democratic aims, and actuated by the same human ideals. The British Empire is thus something far grander than an Empire in the old sense of the term. The self-governing Dominions are made up of peoples long trained to the management of their affairs. They are inhabited by highly-advanced and progressive democracies who have made new civilizations out of wildernesses, and they look back on their achieve-

ments with intense and legitimate pride. There is no limit to the bounds to which their progress and development may some day attain.

The common sacrifices of England and the Dominions in the war have had the national effect of strengthening feeling. There have been, moreover, the repeated and lengthy visits of the Dominion Prime Ministers to London for consultation with the Cabinet as to the conduct of the war, visits which have had the result of producing a clearer perspective of the life of the Empire as a whole. The prospect of a permanent Empire Cabinet is discussed as a coming development, and though there is doubt as to the practicality of this proposal, certainly new and better arrangements will be made for counsel and action henceforth on common objects between the Dominion Governments and the Home Government. The future will have its own riddles for the British Empire, but looking as far as two generations ahead it seems that Anglo-Saxon bonds will grow stronger and not weaker. Fundamental changes, if they arise later, will probably be due to the growth of population in the Dominions. Here are continents like Canada and Australia with seven millions and five millions of people respectively. New aspects of the British Empire may present themselves when these vast and fertile stretches of the earth's surface are each supporting, let us say, a hundred million human beings.

CHAPTER XV

THE PRESENT BRITISH CHIEFTAIN

WHAT of the men whom Fate has placed in charge of England for the present and the immediate future? Can they ride the whirlwind? It chances that just now England is rich in personality—and in times of stress it is personality and not principle that rules a nation.

Crucial periods of history often throw up great men —though not always. The men in authority at such periods enjoy, or suffer, as the case may be, an artificial fame, and if they are big enough and strong enough that fame solidifies, may even remain after they have passed from life and become an inspiration for the people of the future. So far as the immediate crisis is concerned, if strong talent appears at the appropriate moment, the effect will be incalculably great. The tide of national happenings results from a mixture of emotions derived from the experience of generations, but the exact time of great changes, and the precise direction they take, and the length to which they proceed is often entirely dependent on the superman or supermen of the time. We all know that persistent economic forces, or the long-continued pressure of men and women for liberty in its various manifestations, pro-

duce settled theories and creeds. A definite belief thus evolved sometimes proceeds to triumph. But the popular impression that tenets widely held and long in persistence are responsible for the fashioning of great men, ignores the fact that these tenets are themselves often the product of perhaps one great man, sometimes of more than one. A flashing brain with an iron will has produced a belief or a policy which at points in history has influenced mankind; and especially is this true of progressive spirits as against those with reactive tendencies. It is useless to seek for the motive power in these supermen. We may dismiss the idea that their impulses spring from what may be called virtue alone. Environment may make a person with brilliant talents a highly effective villain, or a saint to be revered. There are some men whose dynamic equipment is such as to cause them to be leaders on the grand scale in thought and action—whether history regards that thought or action to be good or bad. Happy the race, happy the country which in times of great need, in periods of dangerous flux, has produced the individual or individuals who are careless of personal advantage, who are illuminated by glowing faith.

The future of the world depends very largely on the men who are forced to the front during the next five years. If it is true of the world, it is certainly true of every individual country, of Britain as well as of the others. A man who stands out prominently in the United Kingdom at the present time is the Prime Minister, David Lloyd George. He has plenty of

enemies, plenty of detractors, and no student of human nature would pretend that he is a perfect man. But he is at any rate a big man, a far bigger man than any other one of the British race at the present moment. He is open to criticism. But one need not regard him either as an angel or an idol to recognize that as a human force he is beyond any leader that the British race has produced in the last generation, perhaps in the last century.

Elusive as the winds are the motives of any abnormally strong man. Contemporary judgment is almost bound to err in an attempted appraisal of the guiding thoughts and influences behind any single person. It may be doubted whether that single person could himself set out clearly what is leading him on. He would probably give some conventional explanation. In strict accuracy his motives are unexplainable, as unexplainable as many other of the great forces of nature. We witness the unremitting and appalling strength of the Falls of Niagara. They are possibly not more ignorant of why they persist in their courses than the sentient human beings who have guided history.

Mr. Lloyd George, 57 years of age, has the snow white hair of a patriarch, and the sparkling eyes of a youth. He is thicker in body and his shoulders are heavier, and his step is a little slower than when, a dozen years ago, he first entered upon office and set out in the face of doubts from friends and sneers from enemies to make himself a statesman who, for good or

bad, should remodel the face of the country. He looked thin. He was also rather fierce. Humour would sparkle from him sometimes, a mordant stabbing humour, and with him it was a supreme argument. But he was fighting his way then, as earlier, and a kind of hard determination sat upon him. Now, when he enters the House of Commons, filled out a little in physique, there sits upon him a kind of benevolence, the happy geniality of the chieftain with his faithful followers. Serenity is perhaps the word which best describes his atmosphere. He has aged much—but after all, the war is won, and he is leading the House of Commons with a tremendous majority, elected largely upon his personal prestige. The future may well take care of itself so far as he is concerned. Yet when all is said, the fact remains that Mr. Lloyd George remains a fighter still, and when the time comes, as come it probably will, when he has to battle with his back against the wall, against a sea of political enemies, there will be manifested the old fire, the old courage, and the old resistless energy which has taken him to world eminence.

When Mr. Lloyd George's characteristics come to be summed up, I think the quality which will most stand out will be his courage. Of course, courage alone would have served him little, but united as it was with some of the highest capacities for swift brain work, it has carried him from success to success, whereas sheer intellect would have left him in the rut. It was born in him, this courage. As a boy of twelve he defied his

schoolmaster and clergyman who wanted him to say the Creed in church. Some may put this down to the severe Non-conformist teaching of his boyhood, but I am more inclined to think it showed a natural individuality, some would call it a natural devilment.

When he was in his early twenties, a young solicitor in a Welsh village, he gave audacious advice to co-religionists who had been refused permission by the Rector of the parish to bury an old Non-conformist by the side of his dead daughter in the churchyard. Mr. Lloyd George advised his clients to break down the churchyard gates and take the body in, and, so to speak, bury it by force if necessary. He went with them to see it done, possibly with the utmost willingness to lend a hand himself. This was courage. The brain that went with it was shown by the fact that as the ultimate result of ensuing law actions, the Lord Chief Justice of England held him right in law in giving the advice he did to his village clients.

David Lloyd George lost his father when he was three, and his mother and he and a brother were taken care of by an old bachelor uncle, Mr. Richard Lloyd, a village shoemaker, who lived in a little picturesque place called Llanystumdwy, which lies between the Carnarvon mountains and the sea. This self-sacrificing uncle put his life savings into the education of the boy. His scanty store was not too much. When Lloyd George had passed his final examination at the age of twenty-one, there was not enough money in the family to buy him a solicitor's gown, without which he could not

practise in the Courts, the money required being three guineas. Mr. Lloyd George went and earned it at desk work.

He soon achieved local fame, not only as an advocate but as a politician. His gifts of oratory, his tigerish energy, his flaming democratic spirit set him before his country like a beacon. He was only twenty-seven when his people asked him to stand as Liberal candidate for the wide district known as the Carnarvon Boroughs. He fought and won it, beating the Conservative squire to whom as a village boy on his way to school he used to touch his hat as a mark of respect.

Interesting enough in these days is Mr. Lloyd George's written comment on the House of Commons just after he had entered it as a young man of twenty-seven. "The House is essentially democratic. It cares neither for rank nor for wealth. It is bored by a millionaire; it listens instantly to a sometime booking clerk. It pays homage to knowledge, to talent, to statesmanship, and to genius."

Those opponents who in these later days are fond of labelling Mr. Lloyd George as an opportunist by instinct, as the man with his ear to the ground, as the constant seeker after popularity, forget his earlier years, really not so very long ago, when he opposed the Boer war, when in the face of patriotic fervour he enveloped himself in clouds of hate. He never faltered. He went to meetings where he was in physical danger. He even journeyed to Birmingham, the stronghold of Mr. Chamberlain, and addressed a meeting which was

broken up in a riot in which one man was killed and many injured.

It is probably true to say that as he has progressed in power he has used to the uttermost his remarkable fertility in expedients. On big matters of principle—take three diverse instances, the Boer war, the Budget of 1909, the war with Germany—he is adamant, but in methods of execution he is as flexible as a whiplash. If by giving in a little to-day he can get a great deal more to-morrow no devotion to a party label will restrain him. He has no aversion to using the newspapers. If a title to a commercial magnate will help on the good cause, the title is promptly forthcoming. He tolerates sycophants, not for the sake of their beautiful eyes, but because he can make use of them. He will utilize his real friends, he will ignore them, he will break them—just as they affect progress towards his goal. Tornadoes of hate must always encircle the activities of such a man. But it is equally certain that he will always have a hold on the country because he is a strong man who gets things done. His ruthless organization of Britain to produce shells and guns in the early stages of the war is a sample of his methods. Careless in detail, personally good-natured, without an ounce of affectation or official dignity, brimming with humour, he has within him blazing fires which occasionally break into sight to sear or scorch or destroy those opposed to him. Just at present the newspapers and politicians of England are searching the present and the future to find out whether he is going to become a

Conservative or a Labour man, or to try to hold the headship of a reunited Liberal party. It is all beside the point. Lloyd George is out to reconstruct a war-dismantled England, and is not thinking in the least of party labels—except in so far as in a minor degree they may help him towards his objective.

Mr. Lloyd George would not be so remarkable a man if there were not many contrasts of light and shade in his temperament. What may be called his vitality of brain makes up for the absence of important bearing—deportment is perhaps the better word. He does not trouble to be dignified in the sense of stiff graciousness and reserve, which is sometimes a powerful weapon in the hands of those in a high position; sometimes, indeed, a weapon without which they would be lost. A lesser man than Mr. Lloyd George would be irretrievably in the background with his indiscretions. Possessing an intuition which is uncanny, a power of looking into the minds of people with whom he is brought in contact on the instant, he has also the faculty of revealing himself openly, instantly. His swift and tortuous brain can afford it. In personal conversation he has a lively and rippling tongue, tells good stories, reveals political secrets in a manner which would shock the old-time statesmen. One factor in all this is that he is an unerring judge of men, and his so-called indiscretions are really not such indiscretions after all. It is amazing how few of what may be called his inconvenient and careless confidences either become known or cause any difficulties. He really does not care—he fears no one.

With a fund of subtlety he is yet in fundamentals a simple-minded man. Why should he care?—that is the attitude. A comparatively poor man, money has no attraction for him. (It has been recently computed that his salary as Prime Minister, £5,000 a year, with its deductions on the one hand, and its reduced purchasing power on the other, is equivalent to a pre-war payment of about £30 a week.) He has no use for titular honours, although with a lavish hand he distributes peerages, knighthoods, and baronetcies to those who are of service in particular directions. Such a man is not easily vulnerable.

It does not matter in the least to Mr. Lloyd George that the defects of his qualities pursue him unrelentingly. "They say. What say they? Let them say." He is no hero, devoid of guile. Beneath a perfectly sincere gaiety, one of his most persistent characteristics, there is at work unceasingly a brain seeking for advantages. Who can doubt that even the closest of his political friends is steadily and unceasingly under that scrutiny? It may be taken as a species of self-preservation by counter-attack, for there is an army of lickspittles of high and low degree pressing on him all the time with flattery, with offers of help, with desire for counsel—all and every one of them searching for some special favour. His name and influence manufacture adulation. And he is shrewd enough to take everything at its face value, to return soft word for worship open or implied—even possibly to leave the impression that he knows a true friend when he sees

one. The innocent's heart is warmed thereby, and the warmth does not entirely vanish for weeks or months. Never a Prime Minister so open and accessible, never one who so carefully distributed his openness and accessibility. Gracious and open-hearted officials welcome you to 10, Downing Street as if you were a brother. They indicate that one of the desires uppermost in Mr. Lloyd George's mind is to see you. More than once he has sought the opportunity. Of course, it is difficult to fix in appointments, but leave it for a few days, and no doubt the Prime Minister will arrange the matter whatever else he puts on one side. The poor deluded creature goes away swelling with pride. He is unaware of the fact that he is on the borderline of some subordinate usefulness to the Government, and that the order has gone forth for soft words to him. Manner hardens when apparent value seems to be diminishing. Once in a way in these matters Mr. Lloyd George makes a mistake and an enemy—but not often. He will slight persons recklessly, but only if he thinks they can be slighted with impunity. He did it once with one of his own Cabinet Ministers—and months afterwards joked about it with his victim!

When the story of these great times comes to be written in the far distant future the picture of Lloyd George the man will perhaps be more vividly presented than that of Lloyd George the political leader. By swift transpositions from a country youth to a member of Parliament before he was thirty, Cabinet Minister at forty, Chancellor of the Exchequer at forty-five, Prime

Minister ten years later, he has built up a life story which will have an appeal far beyond the politically minded, those narrow circles who find salvation (and their sole interest) in wordy theories, good or bad, which may or may not be translated into action in Parliament. He told me once of his abiding delight in the stories of Dumas and Stanley Weyman. You get a sudden glimpse of the man there. Quick action, fighting. dare-deviltry, with a cool mind and a calm eye, all these things are part and parcel of him. As a schoolboy defying the local parson, as a young lawyer challenging the virtual lords of the countryside, as a guerrilla M. P. withstanding the supremacy of Chamberlain, the tiger leader of Parliament, he proceeded in office to take away powers of the House of Lords possessed by them for eight hundred years, and presently to lead England in the greatest war she has known and to take her on to victory. Here is a panorama which transcends politics.

It might be surmised by the stranger that a man with Lloyd George's record is a somewhat imposing person to meet, but the weird thing is there is not a human being who does not feel instantly at home with him. "He's such a nice fellow you wouldn't know he was clever," said a man of the world who met him for the first time. It is this human side which takes him out of the general portrait gallery of statesmen. He goes to church twice on Sunday. He loves to join in a comic song. A big cigar is his habitual luxury. If he abstains from liquor himself, excellent wine is on his

table for those guests who are not teetotallers. As to conversation he is probably one of the best raconteurs in the country. His quick-wittedness on the public platform as well as in Parliament is a never failing weapon. Retorts from him would make a book in themselves. Some years ago Mr. Hugh Edwards, M. P., in the course of his biography gave some nuggets seized at random. I take leave to borrow a few:

"I am here," he remarked in a platform speech, but before he had time to finish the sentence a noisy interrupter exclaimed, "So am I." "Yes," said Mr. Lloyd George, "but you are not all there."

Years ago at a meeting Mr. Lloyd George was advocating devolution of local affairs in the British Isles. "We must give Home Rule not only to Ireland but to Scotland and Wales." "And Home Rule for Hell," thrust in a raucous opponent. "Quite right," was the retort. "Let every man speak up for his own country."

Speaking in the House of Commons on an Education Bill he said: "If our Navy were conducted on the denominational principle as is our system of national education we should see our warships scheduled for the various denominations just as we now see training colleges marked off for the exclusive use and advantage of members of the Church of England only, we should then have Dreadnoughts for Anglicans, cruisers for Congregationalists, torpedo destroyers for fiery Methodists, while for the Baptists there would be the submarines."

Referring once to Germany's export trade, he explained the situation thus: "The Germans are more pushing than ourselves. When the German traveller goes to Argentine he is found speaking Spanish. If he goes to China he speaks 'Chin Chin.' But go to any part of the world and you will find the English traveller pushing his goods in broad Scotch."

This was how he spoke of a Welsh Bishop who opposed Disestablishment: "You cannot make a first-rate Bishop out of a third-rate scholar, a fifth-rate preacher, a no-rate theologian, and an irate priest."

"I do not blame Mr. Austen Chamberlain," he declared in a speech on the fiscal question, "for sticking to his father. But the considerations which have made him a Protectionist are not fiscal but filial. Neither am I surprised to find him remaining in the Government after his father has gone out of it. History is ever repeating itself. The boy still stands upon the burning deck."

These are only sparks from the anvil, but they give a glimpse of the man at work. It is on the constructive side that Mr. Lloyd George is really strong, for his peculiar capacity comprises a far-reaching imagination which he can turn into practical plans. He has also an unbendable way of carrying through his projects. Those projects may be good or bad, but once he has decided on them he will break down mountains in order to make them into working forces. This power of concrete action is a rare accompaniment of poetic fervour, to say nothing of a sense of humour. It helps

to make Mr. Lloyd George incalculable to his opponents. It also causes them severe annoyance at times.

Whatever his party label is in the future his temperament will not change, and his outlook on life will be as it has been from the days of his boyhood. A thousand tools of political craft have been added unto him since then. In his manipulation of the machine of state he has alienated the devotion of many sincere and ardent men, notably labour leaders and Irishmen, they say because of his methods and change of principles. No one knows to which party he will attach himself when his work of national reconstruction is further advanced. This much it is safe to say, that he will be the leader wherever he goes, and that he will galvanize any group he joins into new and fateful lines of activity.

The war has aged him, but he is still only fifty-seven. In five years his hair has gone white, but his eyes still burn fiercely.

CHAPTER XVI

THE OLD GANG

WHILE new men come to the front for the new era, the older men are taking a part, for though policy and methods are in evolution English character runs forward like a thread. Calm adaptability is one of the traits. Look at the old opponents of Mr. Lloyd George who used to scoff contemptuously at him and who now sit under his leadership on the Front Bench. They were sincere before; they are sincere now.

There is a group of statesmen who have been largely responsible for the conduct of British affairs during the past generation, whose influence is still to some extent potent, and who will play some part in the making of the new England. They are men whose political opinions are at variance, but who nevertheless are of a common class, and who in spite of the party labels which are attached to them have in the wider sense a common vision with regard to their country.

Let us take a glance at Mr. Balfour, the eldest of the active group. Tall and thin, languid-mannered, with shining white hair, as gentle and refined in looks as he is in tone of speech, Arthur Balfour has had a fighting career in politics for forty-five years, and now over seventy years of age still plays a remarkably fine game

of lawn tennis, to say nothing of golf. No stranger would think he was seventy. In some respects he will always remain the perfectly poised dandy of thirty. And yet behind that silky exterior is a will of steel, a ruthlessness and flawless courage moral and physical. He should never have been a politician at all; he should have been a philosopher. He is one by nature; politics to him are among the manifestations of human activities; that is, all his deepest interests are intellectual. He came into politics almost by accident, partly because of his aristocratic connections. He remained in because his superbly equipped brain and imperturbable temperament made him a commander among men. He could not be spared. And now, still in harness, to what a life he looks back! No description can convey Mr. Balfour's varied interests and powers better than an extract from the reference books. Here it is: Educated Eton, Trinity College, Cambridge, (M. A.). Hon. LL.D. Edinburgh, 1881; St. Andrews, 1885; Cambridge, 1888; Dublin and Glasgow, 1891; Manchester, 1908; Liverpool, 1909; Birmingham, 1909; Bristol, 1912; Sheffield, 1912; Columbia, 1917; Hon. D. C. L. Oxon., 1891. M.P. (C.) for Hertford, 1874–85. Private Secretary to Marquis of Salisbury, when Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1878–80; employed on Special Mission of Lords Salisbury and Beaconsfield to Berlin, 1878; Privy Councillor, 1885; President of Local Government Board, 1885–86; Secretary for Scotland with seat in Cabinet; Vice-President of Committee of Council on Education for Scotland,

1886–87; Lord Rector, St. Andrews University, 1886; Chief Secretary for Ireland, 1887–91; Member of Gold and Silver Commission, 1887–88; elected Member of Senate, London University, 1887; F.R.S., 1888; Lord Rector, Glasgow University, 1890; Created Congested Districts Board for Ireland, 1890; Chancellor of Edinburgh University since 1891; Correspondent l'Academie des Sciences morales et politiques (L'Institut de France); Leader House of Commons and First Lord of Treasury, 1891–92; Leader of Opposition, 1892–95; President British Association, 1904; Prime Minister, 1902–05; 1st Lord of Treasury and Leader of House of Commons, 1895–1906; Gifford Lecturer, Glasgow University, 1913–14; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1915–16; Head of British Mission to America, 1917. Publications: A Defence of Philosophic Doubt, 1879: Essays and Addresses, 1893 (third and enlarged edition, 1905); The Foundations of Belief, being Notes introductory to the Study of Theology, 1895; Economic Notes on Insular Free Trade, 1903; Reflections suggested by the New Theory of Matter, 1904; Speeches (1880–1905) on Fiscal Reform, 1906; Criticism and Beauty (Romanes Lecture), 1909; Theism and Humanism (Gifford Lectures, 1914), 1915. Recreations: Captain, Royal and Ancient Golf Club, St. Andrews, 1894; President, National Cyclists' Union; motoring, tennis.

I saw Mr. Balfour the other evening on the Front Bench of the House of Commons in the midst of a long line of Ministers, and he looked no older than when fifteen years ago he was at the head of the Government

and the leader of the House of Commons. It is hard to realize that he has turned seventy. He is still slim and debonair, with a fund of vivacity concealed behind eyes which carry a slight affectation of boredom. I suppose his hair is whiter than it used to be when he was Prime Minister, but I really do not notice any difference.

Like many highly strung and finely spun men, Mr. Balfour has a reserve of intense nervous energy which any big emergency will call into play, but in ordinary times if the truth must be told he does not love work for its own sake. (I should like to hear him speak of those who work for the sake of work.) All the same, if his interests are aroused there are few in public life who can keep up with the quick action of mind, body, and will that Mr. Balfour can put into a project or a series of projects.

As he lay back on the Treasury Bench the other night in the midst of a debate on economy his attitude was characteristic. Most of the other Ministers were all attention, and some of them showed signs of anxiety. The issue was at least as serious to Mr. Balfour as to any of them. He reclined on the Treasury Bench, his head resting on the rail, his eyes directed upward into space, with his mind apparently centred on visions far away. I have seen him like that in the old days when he was leading the Opposition against the most powerful Government of modern times in which Mr. Lloyd George was the leading fighter. Now he sits at the side of Mr. Lloyd George and is one of his principal

lieutenants. It is worth stating in parenthesis here that Mr. Arthur Balfour had many temperamental likes and dislikes on the personal side, and that in spite of his stern battles with the present Prime Minister he always rather liked him. His particular friendship with Mr. Asquith, his chief opponent for many years, is well known.

Mr. Balfour's devotion to the national cause during the war, his readiness to accept comparatively subordinate office, his value as a wise and experienced counsellor in nearly all the departments of State, has placed Britain under a debt to him which will be only fully recognized by history. He suffered a long spell of hatred from his lesser opponents. Possibly he deserved it—politically. Dabbling in literature and metaphysics, he was of no great account in affairs of State up till 1887, when he was appointed Irish Secretary. He was chiefly known at that time for his authorship of "A Defence of Philosophic Doubt." Suddenly in his new post the quality of the man came to light. Some of the Irishmen thought they had an effeminate young person to deal with. "We will make short work of Clare," they announced cheerfully. They received the shock of their lives; Mr. Balfour promptly began to show a new phase. It did not make him loved—indeed the Nationalists detested him. His languor was gone. He flung himself into his work with fiery and furious energy; he showed a will of staggering tenacity. That was the beginning of Mr. Balfour as a statesman; a generation has come and gone since then.

Experience has softened Mr. Balfour a little; it has worn away many of the austerities with which his former opponents regarded him. He is among the fathers of the House of Commons, and members, without regard to politics, look up to him with respect and affection. He on his part, typical aristocrat though he is, has preferred always to remain a member of the lower House, which to him is the symbol of the nation. That his love of the House of Commons should make him remain plain Mr. when by almost the lifting of a finger he could become an Earl, displays a touch of that true democracy of which the House of Commons is the nursing ground.

Let me try to describe Mr. Balfour in action as I have seen him, not once, but a score of times. Bring to the mind's eye a crowded House of Commons with a Minister making an important speech at the Table. On the Front Bench at the other side of the Table in a line of ex-Ministers lounges a tall thin man with a pleasant oval face. His poise is ungainly, he is sitting low on the bench, with his feet resting on the edge of the table in front of him, and his long thin legs, in order to find accommodation, bent at the knees. His eyes are on his pince-nez, which he is gently swinging to and fro in front of him. From his expression he might be thinking of next week's golf; his mind is apparently far away from the troubled storm of politics. The Liberal Minister takes his seat. Quick as lightning the tall thin man with the oval face brings his legs down from the table and springs up. "We have just

listened to a speech, Mr. Speaker," he is saying, "which presages disaster not only to the community at present, but calamities for generations yet to come." That is Mr. Balfour beginning an attack. Lassitude is completely gone. Uncompromising words come from him in a musical voice which emphasizes their effect. The Balfourian atmosphere envelops the House. As the pungent phrases drop from him one realizes that when he was lounging on the Front Bench a few minutes before he was not really thinking of the next week's golf.

I was present in America during Mr. Balfour's visit there in the course of the war, and can bear tribute to the permanent effect he had, not only with the most distinguished individuals in that country, but also on the common people. He rose to the occasion splendidly, even when the circumstances were not such as would always appeal to a man of his training and instinct. I heard him make a delightful little speech on the day when he arrived in New York, when he was received by the Mayor and other dignitaries, and a few days later, when in response to a call from the audience at a patriotic performance at Carnegie Hall, he came forward from the back of his box and made an enthusiastic red-hot speech about England and America; he swept the great gathering into breakers of enthusiasm.

Let us take a companion picture in the person of Mr. Asquith, a somewhat younger man than Mr. Balfour, but a contemporary leader. They faced each other on opposite sides of the House of Commons first

in subordinate positions, and later as Prime Minister and leader of the Opposition respectively. He is of a different breed to Mr. Balfour, of a different temperament, too, although there are many points of resemblance in the make-up of the two men. He comes of a steady middle-class Yorkshire stock, and every step of his way through life has been due to his own industry and talents.

Herbert Henry Asquith, Oxford Scholar, distinguished advocate and twice Prime Minister of England, is a man who will go down in the history books partly because he became leader of the greatest Liberal majority the House of Commons has known since the Reform Bill; partly from his generalship in passing the Lloyd George Finance Bill and in securing the reform of the House of Lords; partly and perhaps chiefly because he was the Prime Minister who threw the might of British arms into the war against Germany and laid the foundation of victory. Perhaps also there will appear in the records of the historian some indication of his remarkable individuality, an individuality which I regard as more distinctly English than that of any Prime Minister for a generation. Deeply read, a master of sonorous phrase, with clear logical mind, he was one of the supreme parliamentarians of his time. He was more than that. By sheer brain-power he lifted himself from the time he was a boy at the City of London School through his University career to distinction at the Bar and thence to distinction in the State. He was Home Secretary from 1892 to 1895. When Campbell Banner-

man took office at the end of 1905, he became Chancellor of the Exchequer, that is first lieutenant to the Prime Minister, and he succeeded his chief as Prime Minister in 1908. That is a bare outline of the latter part of his political career. It gives but little hint of the energy which throughout the years he has put into his profession and into his political activities.

The first time I saw Mr. Asquith was when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1907; I heard him deliver his Budget speech. It was a masterly and lucid exposition of facts, and by his wonderful gifts of comprehension on the one hand and clarity on the other he made the complicated story of our national finance so easy that a boy might have understood, and at the same time made it so interesting that it was more like a short story by a master writer than a description of taxes and revenue. He has not changed much in appearance since that time. He had a clear-cut face, the cleverness of which is emphasized by the rather long white hair of a man not yet old. He always gave me the impression of one who would strive unswervingly through the buffets of chance. I can see him now in the House of Commons picking his way over the outstretched feet of Ministers on the Front Bench with the slow precision of an idler. His hands would be in his trousers pockets, his face would be placid, slightly bored, and his whole attitude that of the spectator only faintly interested in the scene which his entry in the chamber had opened up for him. He would drop with dignified air into the long line of Ministers on the

Front Bench and casually take up the order paper of the day with the manner of a man who may as well see what is going on though it does not really interest him very much. Nobody was deceived by his apparent placidity. The cold face of the Prime Minister had the effect of a tonic on the crowded lines of his supporters. They had come to know that Mr. Asquith with his seeming indifference could within thirty seconds turn himself into a dragon of furious action.

The task which he accomplished can only be comprehended when it is remembered that he took command of the Liberal Government at a very early stage of its existence, a Government which had a hundred projects to carry out after an absence of nearly a generation from political power. The first great thing was Mr. Lloyd George's Budget, when the fiery genius of the Welshman was buttressed by the cold strength and brilliant intellect of the Yorkshire Prime Minister. They were an ideal pair in many respects. It is not too much to say that these two men remoulded the face of Great Britain for good or evil. In the ensuing year the Finance Bill—that is the Budget—challenged by the Lords led to the throwing down of the gauntlet to the upper House. Then came the Parliament Bill taking away powers of the Lords which they had possessed for eight hundred years. Months of weary work and strenuous fighting day by day and by night led to the consummation of these measures.

An ardent Liberal, Mr. Asquith has the polished exterior of the aristocrat—a scorn for emotion and the

contempt for weakness which goes with the best of British blood. He is a hard man to tackle. The Conservatives used to assail him fiercely. He gave them little satisfaction. I remember how on one occasion Mr. Stanley Wilson, an enthusiastic Conservative suffering under an official evasion, arose and exclaimed truculently: "Are we to understand that the matter is no longer one of urgency as we were told last session?" Mr. Asquith stepped to the table, and all the House sank to quietness to listen to the expected ministerial pronouncement. "The Hon. Member," said Mr. Asquith blandly, "can draw what conclusion he likes." He is sometimes rather austere and unapproachable, but he is one of the most loyal chieftains that Parliament has ever known. He will never throw over a supporter, or give the cold shoulder to a friend. In this he resembles the late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain who was always particularly staunch to those who had at any period of his career stood by him.

But Mr. Asquith has a very human side to him, and politics never disturb his friendship with those with whom he is allied in temperament. Mr. Asquith and Mr. Balfour have for a generation been close personal friends. There was one celebrated occasion not many years ago when, leading their respective sides to battle from the front benches, they presently met in private talk behind the Speaker's chair. Leaving the excited partisans to fight out some great political principle they stole off together to an Underground station and travelled to the pleasure rendezvous which used to be

known as Earl's Court; there they had a happy evening together, one of their experiences being repeated descents on the water-chute. Piquancy is in the thought of what would have been the reflections of leading Liberals and leading Conservatives engaged in battle in the House of Commons could they have known where their respective chiefs were, and what they were doing at that particular time.

When war threatened, Mr. Asquith with Sir Edward Grey strove his hardest against hostilities. When the die was cast he announced to Germany and to the world that the sword was drawn and would never be sheathed until victory crowned our arms. The sentence in which he said that went round the world like a trumpet call; enemies and friends were deeply affected. The Dominions overseas sprang to the help of the Mother Country. Powerful neutrals, such as America then was, quoted the words and pondered on their outcome. It is not too much to suppose that they sent a cold feeling through the hearts of our enemies. What he forecast has come to pass. In those terribly trying early days of the war he spoke for England and faithfully represented her mood to the world at large. Though out of power he has seen his plans and his determinations brought to fruition. Mr. Asquith will yet emerge as one of the national leaders whom this country could ill-spare from the forefront of its activities.

Viscount Grey of Falloden, a rather sombre, gracious and aloof man is a statesman whom an Englishman will

always be proud of as a typical representative of British leadership. An aristocrat by descent and in culture, an unpretentious democrat in every political thought, an idealist who tolerates a weak man but who would have no toleration for himself in the greater issues, a man who loves the simple country life, hates crowds, perfectly careless of popularity—such is the Liberal statesman who came out of retirement forced upon him by serious physical affliction, and went to America in 1919 as a temporary Ambassador.

When a young man in the twenties Edward Grey succeeded his grandfather in the baronetcy, and marrying quite early, settled down with his young wife in his two thousand acre estate in Northumberland to that country life which then and ever since has been his greatest happiness. On the cliffs, in the woods or by the brink of some glittering noisy stream he was in his element. Here it was his quiet reflective nature found full scope. The country people adored him, for without being able to analyze their reasons they knew him for the man he was. An idyllic relationship continues till this day. He is only happy among his own folk under the open sky in the lovely countryside of Falloden. There is a touch of irony in the fact that this young man with a soul for nature, a hatred of wordy dissensions, should have been thrust into the cauldron of politics. I cannot imagine him touched with worldy ambition. Probably enough the force of events and a sense of duty started him on the road. The people of Berwick-on-Tweed wanted him as their representative

in Parliament, and they elected him their member in 1885 when he was twenty-three, and he remained their member for thirty-two years continuously till 1917, when he was raised to the peerage. In Parliament his qualities brought promotion quickly, but politics do not make up life for him. In the year after he left office he was winner of the M.C.C. and Queen's Club tennis prize. A year or so later he wrote his classic little work on "Fly Fishing." He travelled little. Whenever he could escape London he was back at his beloved Falloden. At this time he was the handsomest man in Parliament, tall, erect, with classic features and raven hair.

While he continued to take part in public life he hated some of the currencies of politics, the zest for popularity, the scheming for success, the intrigues, the clamour of it all. Nevertheless, when the Liberal Government came in at the end of 1905 he found himself called to the position of Foreign Minister. He would not have been human had he not felt at least a temporary glow at the occupancy of this, one of the highest positions in the British Empire. It is safe to say that Lady Grey was prouder than he was. And it was just at this period that the great blow of his life fell. In 1906 Lady Grey was killed in an accident. For years afterwards Sir Edward Grey was never seen in anything but black.

How as Foreign Minister in 1914 he fought to avert the great European War alone makes the name of "Grey" a monument among peace-loving peoples;

how when the die was cast he told Germany with no exaltation, but with deep solemnity, that the issue for Britain was now victory or death will keep his name honoured while British history is written. His labours in the early years of the war cannot yet be adequately told, but it may be assumed that they were largely responsible for the subsequent threat of total blindness.

One of the political leaders in England, and who looks in his young middle age and may very well hold office as Prime Minister, is Mr. Bonar Law, the first lieutenant to Mr. Lloyd George in the Coalition Government, and the leader of the House of Commons not only by special delegation of his chief, but also with the cordial assent of the members who make up the supporters of the Government. One may go further than this and say that Mr. Bonar Law is popular on the personal side even with those who oppose him in Parliament. He is one of those men whom power and authority develop and ripen. It may not be a copy-book maxim but it is nevertheless one of the rules of life that there are certain individuals who seem mediocre in the smaller posts but who blossom out with startling ability when they are given power and scope and high position. Not that Mr. Bonar Law is an assuming or an aggressive man. Really one would guess that he was unambitious by any casual survey of his moods and manners. This, however, would be a serious mistake as is easily realized when one surveys his life as a whole. The son of the Rev. James Law, a

Presbyterian minister who had been called to a pastorate in New Brunswick, and who was long recognized as one of the most powerful preachers in Eastern Canada, Andrew Bonar Law was born in New Brunswick on September 16, 1858. His mother was a daughter of the late William Kidstone, an iron merchant of Glasgow, whose firm he was afterwards to join. His early education was received in Canada. At the age of twelve he proceeded to Scotland, where he attended first the Gilbertfield School at Hamilton, and then the commercial section of the Glasgow High School. When sixteen years old he went into his uncle's office. The firm of William Kidstone & Sons carried on a flourishing iron business, and exported largely to Canada and other British Dominions. Here the future statesman was able to familiarize himself with trade methods and to lay the foundation of that commercial knowledge which proved invaluable during the fiscal controversy in which he has since taken so prominent a part. He was able to secure time, however, to attend classes at Glasgow University, and is said to have found the moral philosophy lectures of Professor Caird, afterwards Master of Balliol, specially attractive. After a time he joined the Glasgow Parliamentary Debating Society, of which Mr. Caldwell, afterwards Deputy Chairman of the House of Commons, and Mr. Alexander Cross, who boxed the political compass while representing one of the divisions of Glasgow, were contemporary members. The youthful politician, while still in his teens, is said to have made known his resolve

to become eventually a member of the House of Commons. Even in those early days he attracted attention among his brother debaters by that remarkable fluency and vigour of speech by which he has since appealed to a much wider audience.

In 1886, the year in which Mr. Gladstone introduced his first Home Rule Bill, Mr. Bonar Law, who was then twenty-eight, became a partner in the firm of William Jacks & Co., iron merchants, of Glasgow. For fourteen years business affairs absorbed almost all his attention. Every now and then he spoke at a Conservative meeting in Glasgow, but this was as much as he could accomplish in the way of political work. In the meantime his business affairs prospered exceedingly. So much was this the case that in 1900, at the age of forty-two, he felt himself justified in retiring from commerce and devoting himself to the accomplishment of the ambition he had formed in his debating society days.

It was not long before he secured a seat in Parliament. He was chosen to contest the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow at the General Election of 1900 against a candidate who had been returned in the Liberal interest on three successive occasions, and Mr. Bonar Law astonished everyone by transforming a Liberal majority of nearly five hundred into a Unionist preponderance of close upon a thousand. It was one of the notable victories of the general election, and it enabled Mr. Bonar Law to enter the House of Commons as one whose name was at least known to the general body of

members. Less than two years after his entry into the Commons he became Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, really the second in command to the Cabinet Minister in charge of that department. His business training was now of the utmost value, and the House of Commons found him no amateur politician seeking by fluent speech and would-be wit to make an impression, but a self-contained lucid expositor of facts of which he was a master. His reputation rose rapidly. When after 1906 the Liberals came into power with Mr. Asquith at their head, Mr. Bonar Law developed into one of the most powerful Opposition Leaders. Tenacity was hidden beneath a natural modesty which secured him the goodwill, and here and there, let it be said, the mistaken contempt of both friends and foes. There was an outcry in the Conservative Party against Mr. Balfour as leader, and he resigned the position. The Unionists had to choose between Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Mr. Walter Long, and Mr. Bonar Law, the latter being the third choice. It was Mr. Bonar Law who was selected. In his position as leader of the Opposition he developed enormously and proved himself a possessor of that gift of mastery over the House of Commons which is given to but few men. Let me take a paragraph or two from a sketch of him written by that adept at Parliamentary descriptions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor:

He is Scotch in appearance, Scotch in intellect, Scotch in temperament, Scotch in speech. The long, thin face, the high cheek bones, the expression at once shrewd and genial,

the long, slight, but robust frame—these are characteristics of the Scotch physique. You see them as such in Willie Park or James Braid, the golfers, as in Bonar Law, the Parliamentarian. Bonar Law is Scotch in intellect, just as unmistakably. He has Scotch subtlety, Scotch power of analysis, a certain philosophic method of dealing with propositions which reminds one of the logical orderliness of the typical Scotch professor or Scotch clergyman. He is Scotch also in the glow which now and then he allows to break through the icy surface of his dialectics. Unlike Mr. Balfour in so many respects, yet he bears to him the family likeness that one brilliant Scotchman must always bear to another. He is Scotch in speech, in spite of the temporary aberration of being born in New Brunswick. He belongs, in truth, to the type of man who immediately, instinctively, and inevitably arrests the attention of a legislative chamber or of any body of men. Before I knew him well, even by sight—before I even heard him speak—I knew he was one of the men certain to rise to great destinies. Bonar Law has that instinctive mastery over words which belongs only to the born speaker. He has certain marked peculiarities in the House which also are characteristic of the born speaker. He does not appear, as many speakers do, with laborious notes. He has not a line in front of him. Smooth, easy flowing, uninterrupted, the speech goes on without pause, without hesitation—instinctive as the flow of a river. When he has to refer to a figure or to a quotation, he fumbles in his pockets, brings out a little notebook about the size and cheapness of a penny diary, and reads out the figure or the quotation. The little tattered book is returned to his pocket, and off he starts again, slow, smooth, easy, and uninterrupted. He is master also of the smaller tactics of the House of Commons man; that is to say, he can point an argument by a dexterous, playful, or perhaps bitter little gibe at a personality on the other side. This I once heard irreverently

called the "patter" of the House of Commons; but it is a very useful kind of patter, absolutely necessary to hold the attention of that very human assembly.

Here are striking examples from leaders of the old England. They are helping to hold high the torch.

CHAPTER XVII

THE NEW MEN

INTEREST will focus itself more and more on those individuals who, younger in age or in experience than the veterans, are shaping themselves or being shaped for the guidance of the nation.

There are men who have come to the fore during the war by reason of their capacity, and at least some of them have displayed the vision essential for statesmen. Are there any really big men among them? That is a riddle which only time can answer, although the time necessary for the answer may be but a few months. A name which has become more frequent and more prominent in the newspapers since 1914 is that of Lord Robert Cecil, by reason first of his tenure of office as the Minister of Blockade, wherein he had to display qualities of tact, understanding, and swift decision with the stake of his country's safety upon his correctitude. He emerged from the ordeal with a high reputation among his countrymen. That reputation was extended in the countries beyond the sea by his work for the League of Nations in Paris during the Peace Conference. It was constructive work inspired by common sense as well as fervency. The descendant of an ancient Tory family, he retains many of the charac-

teristics of his breed, while he has progressed with the times, and in opinion is now (whatever Party label he may attach to himself) a forward-looking Liberal with a wide grasp of democracy's needs and feelings.

He went to Eton and then to Oxford. In 1887 he was called to the Bar, where by means of steady hard work he became strikingly successful, if not famous. He was never eloquent, but his extreme care, assiduity, and enthusiasm made him a power even among those who had the gift of a silver tongue. Not that Lord Robert was devoid of the ability to speak, but his earnestness in presenting a case, in pressing home the salient parts of it, his eagerness to make clear the justice of his cause, were often such as to retard the smooth flow of words and to make for ruggedness rather than polish in his diction.

It was in 1906 that Lord Robert Cecil decided to throw himself into politics, and having been elected for East Marylebone he took up Parliamentary work with all the resolution and painstaking effort which had marked his legal career. At first the House of Commons with its overwhelming Liberal majority was inclined to think him of little account, for everyone remembered the brilliance of his younger brother, Lord Hugh, who was looked upon as the political genius of the Cecil family. There was a hazy impression that Lord Robert was a negligible lordling. The impression was increased by the fact that Lord Robert was at first unobtrusive, and though a very regular and punctual attendant of the House, spoke but seldom. He sat

in the corner seat of a back bench on the Unionist side, and there was a grim resolution behind that unobtrusiveness. Lord Robert never went away in the dullest debate, and was always in his place during all-night sittings, and quickly acquired a knowledge of Parliamentary routine which enabled him quietly to enter a debate when, with but a few Unionist members present, the intervention of a trained and clever lawyer was a godsend. Gradually he built up his reputation. In two years a respect had grown up for him in all parts of the House. His interventions in debate grew more frequent; they also became more powerful, and in some of his speeches members were startled out of themselves by a burst of that Cecilian fervour which now as in the past thrills the British Parliament.

He had this advantage over his brother Hugh, that he possessed a wealth of legal keenness, that he was able to pounce on points only observable to the lawyer, and that a store of experience showed him how various laws worked in practice. As time went on it became evident that he was the most able and persistent among the younger Unionists. With confidence there came to him a touch of bitterness. A persistent all-nighter himself, he scathingly described all-night sittings as "a kind of middle-aged lark." On another occasion he said they represented "legislation by competitive endurance." He put the seal on his reputation when early in 1909 he rose in a crowded House, and declared in the face of his leaders that he could not accept a policy of fiscal reform. Here was a man who by his

great ability was almost certain of position in the next Unionist Government, and who now was deliberately discarding the chance. The House listened in earnest attention, as it always does listen to a strong, courageous member, who has views not altogether recommendable to either of the great parties. A tall man, with gaunt, pallid face, his shoulders hunched up towards his ears, Lord Robert made windmill motion with his arms, as he explained his position. His intensity was such that he held the House in the completest silence. He sat down with his chances of office gone, but with his Parliamentary fame established.

During the great Budget debates throughout 1909 he played a leading part in criticizing the Government's financial proposals. I do not think I missed him on any one day throughout all the discussions. Hour after hour he flung himself into the debate, questions on fact, and points of order alternating with fierce criticisms on matters of principle. He would sit in his seat, a hawk-like man with glistening eyes, head sunk in his shoulders, silk hat tilted forward over his forehead, his picturesque appearance somehow lighting up his peculiar and extraordinary powers.

It is hard to believe that Lord Robert is fifty-three years of age. It is only since about ten years or so ago that he has shone out in public life. Before that time he was a hard working lawyer, although, as a Cecil, keenly interested in religious work and also in politics. At the present moment Lord Robert is likely to become a leader of a party, as yet unnamed. Young politi-

cians are inclined to sit at his feet. Differing in type entirely from Mr. Lloyd George, he is just the kind of man who is likely presently to come out as his chief opponent, and as the alternative choice to him as Prime Minister. It is a curious fact that men in high positions are rarely beaten by those of their own type. Mr. Chamberlain, who wrecked Gladstone's Home Rule scheme, was a vivid contrast to his former leader. Mr. Lloyd George himself was everything that is different from Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, whose place he took as the dominant figure of the House of Commons. Lord Robert Cecil is in many respects the antithesis of Mr. Lloyd George. But these men have one thing in common apart from mentality, and that is their courage, and Lord Robert certainly does not lack that particular attribute. An impartial student of our present-day public men has made the following comment on him which seems to me to sum up Lord Robert Cecil very well:

> Of more practical interest is the question how far the traditional Toryism of the Cecils in other matters has been modified in Lord Robert by experience of the last few years. The larger horizon, clearly, he surveys more in the spirit of his ancestor Burleigh than of the great Victorian statesman, his father. He is, like the Elizabethan, all for caution; more conscious of the perils than the glories of foreign adventure. As a statesman he sees the futility of arrangements founded on mere force; as a Christian he rejects the "jungle theory" of international relations; as a man of sense he rebels against that new fashion of secular Calvinism which assumes that war is the resultant of forces independent of

the human will; as a lawyer he is convinced of the real importance of getting nations, like individuals, to recognize (even if they do not always obey) another law than that of might.

His voice is deep and sweet and sympathetic. An ungainly figure of a man, he radiates both power and charm. Brilliant himself, he has no toleration for cleverness divorced from high principle. With a score of democratic leanings his motto might well be "noblesse oblige," a motto which he would like to impose on the nation (probably with the penalty of torture). It has been truly said more than once that he and his brother Hugh are the kind of men who would joyously go to the stake for their beliefs. It is obvious from this that Lord Robert is not the kind of man an unprincipled schemer likes to deal with. He does not seek popularity. I imagine he may have high ambitions, but he will never dream of realizing them by any sacrifice of his opinions. A strange man—and a real power.

Some ten years ago at the annual Trade Union Conference at a town in the North of England a man arose in the body of the hall to controvert some statement from the platform, a tall bony man of somewhat forbidding aspect. He made a harsh but pithy speech touched with the Scotch accent. "It's Bob Smillie," said someone near me, and he said it in a tone which conveyed that Mr. Smillie was already a notability among the rank and file, and had special characteristics of his own. Times have moved since then. Mr.

Smillie has emerged into a national figure. He is the head of the miners' unions, and in such a position, apart from his own strong personality, may be reckoned as one of the individual forces in the new England. He remains an extremist, but is that dangerous kind of extremist who uses carefully measured words with a view to strong action. If there should ever be such a thing as open revolution in Britain, Robert Smillie would be the predestined leader of it. He gets his power from certain qualities of brain and will, and also from an absolute selflessness. Ambition in the ordinary sense is not in him. His creed is everything. He thinks like a good many others that it is this creed which makes him. As a matter of fact it is he and men like him who give life to their creed. Beginning as a young boy in an engineering works at Govan, he subsequently drifted into mining, and for years worked amid the coal. He still has his home in the mining district of Mid Lanark, where the surroundings are not conducive to poetry or optimism. His gloomy and powerful mind takes something from its environment. He is a cold and thorough type of man; he will take amelioration of labour conditions by the way, but his heart and mind are set on something far different, far stronger. He wants reconstruction of society. Embittered by his early life, Robert Smillie possesses an individuality which in one more favoured by birth and circumstances would inevitably have taken him on to high administrative and legislative work. He has fought several elections; he has never won one of them

in spite of his exceptional hold on the workers of his class. The difficulty is that he will make no compromises; he has no soft words. He cannot touch that indefinable something, that easy-going home-loving good-humouredness that is part of the make-up of the British citizen in any part of the United Kingdom. That is why he is always defeated. And yet Robert Smillie is known to be a human man in his private moments. He is fond of his pipe and plays an excellent game of billiards, of which he is very fond. What is to be his part in the evolution of the new Britain is a puzzle within a puzzle, the solution of which will depend probably on combination of accidents.

Mr. J. H. Thomas, a man not much over forty, who used to be an engine driver, but who is now the chief of the Railwaymen's Union, sits on the Opposition Front Bench in the House of Commons, and is a Right Honourable by virtue of his membership to His Majesty's Privy Council. It is inevitable that in the first Labour Government Mr. Thomas will occupy a position in the Cabinet. He is a cheery man, exceedingly astute, unversed in writing or in literature, with a cockney inclination to drop all his h's, and yet one of the dozen men whom I remember out of the 670 during the five years I spent in watching the proceedings of Parliament as able to command the live interest and the live attention of a full House of Commons during a speech. It has often been said, truly enough, that the House of Commons is the most critical assembly in the world. It is also in many respects the most democratic

assembly. Neither birth, rank, money, influence nor position will cause the House of Commons as such to listen to a man who has nothing to say, however well he may speak. On the other hand a strong spirit, let him be the most obscure member on the back bench, may hold the House, may indeed fill all the benches which before had been unoccupied. I have seen the bulk of members drift out to the smoking rooms, the terrace, the dining room or the library when some dull Cabinet Minister has risen to make a more or less dull speech. There is a kind of cruelty in the spectacle when after a speech by a compelling individual, for instance like Mr. Asquith, some pompous and well-meaning person rises to continue the debate, and three-fourths of the members immediately get up and set out for the various doors of the Chamber. It just depends on the man and what he can do, no matter who he is. Mr. J. H. Thomas, within a comparatively short period, by a native clarity of mind, deliberate fierceness of expression, and native ability, conquered the House of Commons despite his aitchlessness. He was a young man and only second in command of the railwaymen in so far as his office with them was concerned, but in reality he dominated their councils and directed their policy. In the House he fought for them with a shrewdness which equalled his boldness. He stirred respect in the country and in Parliament by occasionally standing out against sections of the men when they wanted to strike. Latterly he has been inclined to stress his effort for statesmanship, and perhaps to

strain it a little. (Coming from Wales he may have some idea of emulating Mr. Lloyd George.) Mr. Thomas lacks the softening influence of wide reading and culture, but he has some of the elements which go towards making a leader of men. There is a disposition to accuse him of being ambitious, and I daresay this is true enough, but the fact need not detract from his public usefulness, and indeed may later on add to it.

A very different man is Mr. J. R. Clynes, who, when he succeeded to the office of Food Controller, establishing himself as the ablest Labour Minister who had been in office. When I say ablest, I mean something wider than organizing and administrative capacity, of which Mr. Clynes has his full share. He was in an unpopular office with extremely difficult work to perform, and that work had to be carried on amid the inevitable criticism continually directed towards nearly all the operations of his department. Yet as the months went on it was seen that his activities were not merely well directed, but were wisely efficient in the sense that they turned out well for the great majority of the community and developed in usefulness as time progressed. When he left office there was nothing but appreciation for him from Liberal, Conservative, and Labour leaders, and what is far more important, from the public in general. A rather small man who is generally silent in conference until the decisive word had to be spoken, a man who, strange as it may seem in a politician, would rather be in the background than in the limelight, Mr. Clynes has a modesty which in

itself is unobtrusive. He seeks to play no great part. When work comes his way he does it to the top of his capacity, and that means that it is generally done better than any one else can do it. Forced to take part in debate, he speaks with a cogency and clearness which carries a convincing persuasion. He is the head of a general Labourers' Union numbering hundreds of thousands. He seeks no office. I look upon him as the one man who may conceivably fill adequately the position of Prime Minister in the first Labour Government.

A new force in public life is Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, who was frequently mentioned some time ago as the man who should be sent to America as Ambassador. He is not very much advertised in the newspapers, and yet through indefinable causes Parliament and the country have swiftly come to regard him as one of the very ablest of our public men. I went to the House of Commons recently on purpose to look at him. I saw him on the Front Bench, a man between fifty and sixty years of age, with ruffled hair, a bumpy forehead, with lids drooping over thoughtful eyes, a firmly shut but mobile mouth. He watched and listened during a lively debate in the House as though he were studying some curious psychological drama—studying it and appraising it rather than enjoying it. No observer of men or women could fail to see at a glance that whatever his temperament might be, here was a man of intellectual power, and also of some intellectual detachment. Immersed in politics for the moment, he was no politician in the ordinary sense. To him political effort was

merely one of the ways of achieving some of the higher purposes of life. His looks fitted in with all I had heard of him. And by the way, it is strange how externals guide one towards a judgment of capacity and temperament. In looking at Mr. Fisher I saw in the form of his head, the shape of his face, and in some part of his expression a reproduction partly of Lord Morley and partly of Sir John Simon. That gives about as good an idea of the man as any lengthy description could possibly do.

Herbert Albert Laurens Fisher was born in 1865; was educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford, and afterwards studied at Paris and Gottingen. He early showed the grasp and scope of his mind, and recognition was accorded him from intellectual circles in various parts of the world. A Fellow and Tutor of New College, Chichele Lecturer on Foreign History, his school was the most successful in recent years, one reason being that he introduced a human element into his courses. He was very popular with the undergraduates; he understood them and they understood him, and the liking he inspired among all made it the easier for him to lead his men along the paths of learning which he had already traversed. He gave a series of lectures in South Africa in 1908, and was Lowell Lecturer in America in 1909. He was a diligent and profound student of history, and in the midst of other work produced some noteworthy books, among them being "The Mediæval Empire," "A Political History of England," "The Republican Tradition in Europe."

The highest posts requiring a special intellectual calibre were open to him, and he was elected a Trustee of the British Museum, and presently burst upon the public as a member of the Cabinet by virtue of his appointment as Minister of Education. That is Mr. Fisher up to date. What his future will be no one can guess, because he is a man of mind and mood transcending material ambitions.

One of his first actions on the Board of Education was to pay a series of visits to London schools in order to talk with the teachers and to witness their work so as to get new light on the problems of elementary education. His first big speech in the House of Commons was awaited with a good deal of interest, because it is strangely true that men who have achieved distinction in other walks of life rarely live up to their reputation in Parliament. There is a peculiar atmosphere as well as a very trying one at Westminster. Crisp, direct, with a full knowledge and a gift of phrase, Mr. Fisher won instant admiration. It was really something like a triumph. One distinguished statesman in the Lobby said afterwards: "It is a welcome change for the House of Commons to listen to a Minister of Education who knows anything about education, and at the same time is not a bore."

You will get a glimpse of the man by an extract from his speech on educational matters. His educational programme, he said, was that a bigger grant would be paid to a poor local authority than to a rich authority, more to a generous authority than to a niggardly

authority, and more to an authority who believed in flesh and blood than to one who placed its trust in bricks and mortar. With refreshing force he argued for a good educational system, and by way of forcing home his lesson he declared that British expenditure on education was only eight times the value of our annual importation of oranges and bananas, and four times the value of the estimated savings of this country in that year (1917) through the partial substitution of margarine for butter.

His capacity for illustration is one of the things that make his talk attractive. He was urging in a speech that more attention should be given to picture galleries, and suggested that pictures, though silent, were not bad pets. "I remember," he said, "an eccentric well-dressed Frenchman, a man of letters, who could be seen wandering at the Palais Royal trailing behind him a large red lobster on a blue cord. To women who offered him the alternative of a pug he was wont to reply, "A lobster is a silent animal. A lobster is a serious animal. A lobster comprehends the secrets of the deep."

Mr. Winston Churchill I am putting among the young men, because in the forties he is still a young man as statesmen go, although I have some doubts as to whether he ought not to be reckoned among the veterans, and what I have called the old gang. There is no mistaking the fact that Mr. Churchill in spite of his high qualities has missed greatness. He has not lacked opportunity. Perhaps some part of the secret is

due to the fact that he has always been so obviously trying to utilize opportunity. When round about thirty he was the young darling of politics, the coming genius, and it was a commonplace to refer to him as the future Prime Minister. That post may come his way yet, but his chances grow less. Withal, he has a marvellous equipment for a great career—unflinching courage, experience as a traveller and a soldier, everything social influence can give him, a wide range of knowledge, literary gifts in speech or writing, and also a talent for organizing and action possessed by very few politicians, however eminent. He has held ministerial positions in number rarely or never held in so short a political career. He has been Undersecretary for the Colonies, President of the Board of Trade, Home Secretary, First Lord of the Admiralty, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Minister of Munitions. He may yet achieve his supreme ambition which is undoubtedly to become Prime Minister, but I fear that whatever the causes which have accounted for his past comparative failure will keep him from the full fruits of his desire. And what are those causes? An able observer in a recently published book makes a suggestion. I believe there is something in it, although I do not think it explains the whole matter. Here is what Mr. E. T. Raymond says about the matter:

> Perhaps the chief reproach lies with his ancestors. At this distance there is visible in him more than a trace of the termagant humour, the restless levity, and the inordinate vanity of Sarah Jennings. He did not get on with the

Unionists. After the first raptures he failed to get on with most Liberals. He did not get on with Lord Fisher. It was perhaps not surprising that he did not get on with the Coalition Cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy—a post for senile wisdom rather than for young pushfulness. Whether the Army did not get on with him, or he with the Army, only he and the Army may say. But the grand gesture with which he went to the trenches was too soon followed by a return to Westminster to suggest entire compatibility. The whisper goes round that at the Ministry of Munitions Mr. Churchill still fails to get on. His ability is not questioned, but he has that type of masterfulness which irritates while it fails to subdue.

There is, however, something more than this to be said. Mr. Churchill with all his brilliance is too obviously the ambitious man. He is so determined to get on. The British public is not drawn towards him by the feeling that he is moved by deep convictions. There is a kind of impression that he has no underlying fund of settled emotions on the great causes. He believes in Winston S. Churchill. It is sometimes difficult to know what else he believes in for any period or with any ardour. The British public is slow in its affections towards such men. Mr. Churchill, who is far more brilliant than a man like Lord Grey, would be simply snowed under with adverse votes if a poll with regard to himself and Lord Grey were taken of the electorate. Such is the effect of temperament. You may call it character if you will.

The brothers Geddes, Eric and Auckland, are two able men—quite new to politics—who have won promi-

nence as Cabinet Ministers during the war. Sir Eric Geddes, a Scottish railway organizer trained in America, a man of wide grasp, quick decisions and crisp manners, was essentially a war Minister. He is still in the Cabinet but I fancy his business training fits him more for the City than for Westminster and I do not look for his long stay in English politics. His brother Auckland, however, now Ambassador at Washington, seems definitely to have taken to British public life in preference to those purely intellectual and educational activities in which he has gained distinction. The importance of the relationships between England and America makes his post in essence a Cabinet appointment. I believe his work will be for the mutual advantage of the two countries. When his term of office is over he will probably come back to a peerage, and some other important work under Government. Undoubtedly, Sir Auckland Geddes is one of the men made by the war. To look at, he is a kind of magnified Sherlock Holmes. Indeed, there is some resemblance to the detective hero in his soft ways, firm will, and mental gymnastics. Only just over forty, Sir Auckland with his tall spare active figure, and his searching eyes still shows the traces of the athletic proclivities of his student days in Edinburgh. It is related that he was a very human person at college, as fond of a comic song as he was of Rugby football. The extraordinary thing was that with all his interests on the healthy boyish side he was something of a prodigy in the study. He sucked up knowledge like a sponge. An examination to him

was little more than a trifle. There is something uncanny in a young fellow like that. Moreover, there was nothing of the dry-as-dust type about him, for when the South African war came he was rapidly at the front as a soldier. Afterwards he went back to his studies and professional success came to him rapidly. With a spacious intellectual range he specialized in certain branches of physiology and in the search for more light toured seats of learning in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. After this professorships came to him. He was at McGill University, Montreal, when the war with Germany was announced and promptly obtained leave of absence to utilize his old experience as a soldier in Europe. His value as an organizer was soon discovered and he went up step by step until when the second conscription act was passed he was brought home from the front to administer it. Transition to a post in the Cabinet was inevitable. He has recently been President of the Board of Trade with a thousand of the unpleasant tasks of national reconstruction work on his shoulders. He was not a marked success in the House of Commons, largely owing to a somewhat pedagogic manner. Parliament hates to be lectured even by the most genial and able of men. Sir Auckland did not mean any harm. He simply could not help it. He wanted to explain things clearly always. Meanwhile he was very popular personally. He is certainly one of the most remarkable of our younger men, and there is big work in store for him.

CHAPTER XVIII

FROM LORD NORTHCLIFFE TO BERNARD SHAW

OUTSIDE politics are scores of men in widely varying spheres who exercise at least as much influence as individuals in Parliament. Take for instance Lord Northcliffe, probably the most successful British business man of a generation. He has some objectionable traits, but in a sense that any big man is bound to have them. He is frequently intolerant. His social and political vision does not extend beyond the day or the month. In the view of his opponents he has frequently been guilty of pandering to popular prejudice—though if this charge were probed there would probably be found that there was no insincerity in Lord Northcliffe, only that he shared popular prejudice and raised it to a high level as a motive force. When all is said against him, Lord Northcliffe remains a big man.

I do not suppose there was ever in recent history a person who achieved so large a measure of national prominence, about whose personality so little was known. Alfred Harmsworth kept himself steadily out of the glare of the limelight while he was pushing his way to fame and fortune. It is one of the traits of this remarkable man that he has a personal modesty, a

temperamental aversion to publicity—a publicity which so many active minded men strive for continually as one of the aims of their lives. He was from his earliest days one who had a pride in doing things and in making his power felt rather than in being talked about. I am not among those who agree with the political views of Lord Northcliffe, but I always have contempt for the ignorance of those who assail him personally, and, who, while deriding his public policies, seek to portray him as approximating to the prince of all evil.

He is an impetuous Cæsar in many of the bigger things. I daresay it can be plausibly argued by his opponents that his influence from time to time has been injurious. That is a matter of political argument. But I can at least give first hand and disinterested evidence that he is a generous, warm-hearted man in his personal relations, and almost an ideal employer, and a man in whom there is no taint of meanness, and one who never forgets a friend while he frequently forgives an enemy.

If the unvarnished story of Lord Northcliffe's life could be told it would make an enthralling volume. There is light and shade, of course. The difficulty is to secure a presentment by an artist big enough to understand his subject, and at the same time with courage enough not to be afraid to tell the whole truth. Take a hasty birdseye view of the man. In his later teens contributing to London papers and magazines, full of energy and ideas even then; at twenty-one

starting a little weekly paper called *Answers* which rumour says for the first two issues he wrote or sub-edited entirely by himself; a few years later taking up the option of the moribund *Evening News* of that day and with the assistance of Mr. Kennedy Jones on the editorial side, and his brother Harold Harmsworth, now Lord Rothermere, on the financial side, turning a loss into a profit in a few weeks, and within a year making the *Evening News* a prosperous London evening paper.

Lord Northcliffe could not have been more than thirty, even if he had reached that age, when the success he had achieved led him to conceive the idea of a new kind of London morning paper, one which would give the news of the day in concise form and at the same time would extract from the daily life of the community human stories which would interest the average man and woman a hundredfold more than long speeches or reports of the police court, or long-winded theories in the shape of leading articles. Thus it was that the *Daily Mail* was born. There were many sneers at the time at "the office boys' paper" but it secured a great circulation, and what is more from the public point of view, it set the fashion for popular newspapers for the coming generation. Alfred Harmsworth was still but a name to Fleet Street. He was still the tawny-haired, handsome, clean-shaven youth in appearance, while he had begun to handle financial propositions which in bulk ran into millions. He acquired or started dozens of publications, and I suppose hardly

more than one per cent. of them failed to maintain themselves, and not ten per cent. of them failed to make a handsome return. His secret may be stated in a sentence or two. There was first his energy which was unceasing, and which was buttressed by a stalwart physical constitution. There was his thoroughness which allowed no department however unornamental or however obscure to remain at anything but a high pitch of efficiency. (I remember how, for example, when he took over the *Evening News* it was the effective distribution of the paper throughout London rather than the contents of it which first put it on the road to success.)

He had sparkle in his mind, and was domineering, tenacious, and thorough. He looked ahead, he saw what people would be interested in to-morrow or next week, and he proceeded to deal with it immediately. Since those times he has become the owner of dozens of journals ranging from the weekly comic paper for boys to the world-famous *Times*. His publications as a whole probably have an influence every day, great or small, on not less than 10,000,000 people in the British Isles. It is a responsibility from which many men would shrink; not so Lord Northcliffe. A strong man still full of youthful energy, he takes it all more or less as a matter of course, and pushes ahead with his plans for the day or week. He is a human dynamo of terrific power. Surveying his activities as a whole, I think history will show he has been a helpful and vitalizing influence in the life of the nation. In the war his

greatest effort and greatest achievement was in stirring the country and the government into the necessity for more shells and more guns, for greater power in explosives, for immensely greater quantities. The Germans were shooting down our men and sweeping forward over their dead bodies because of an enormously superior equipment of arms. Mr. Lloyd George joined hands with Lord Northcliffe. The *Times* and *Daily Mail*," the strongest and most virulent opponents of Mr. Lloyd George, hailed him as the one man for the emergency. Indeed he was. In a period of weeks he reorganized the country from end to end for the supply of munitions, a supply which as the effort developed surpassed that of any country for quality, quantity, and swift delivery. It was a popular move, and Lord Northcliffe secured a deep and far-reaching approval. He took another step which was not popular. Having agitated in the first instance for the appointment of Lord Kitchener as Secretary for War, he presently attacked him with violence and argued for his removal on the ground of his inefficiency for his task. A storm of public indignation against the *Daily Mail* spread through the country, and copies of the journal were burnt in various places as a sign of opprobrium.

Lord Northcliffe never shows himself specially concerned about long views in politics, but he has an amazingly acute sight for a short distance ahead. Moreover, he changes his policy suddenly and without explanation, leaving the facts of the case to make apology. He helped to hound Mr. Asquith from office.

He is now welcoming him back to Parliament. He has attacked and supported Mr. Lloyd George alternately. He was a violent opponent of Home Rule for Ireland and now strongly preaches Home Rule. You can call him an open-minded independent man for this if you like; or you can brand him as a rank opportunist. Perhaps both suggestions have truth in them.

He is always on the alert for criticism of those in power, whoever they may be, and though some may see a catchpenny policy in this the fact remains that he imposes a check on silent excesses of bureaucrats and politicians. For right or wrong he is a force. I do not think he has much vision, but he has a superb business head. This is sometimes awkward for idealists who have more heart than brain.

A man of simple tastes, Lord Northcliffe has a healthful outlook on life. It has been one of his sternest rules that nothing of a doubtful moral nature shall appear in any one of his publications. He is a lifelong teetotaller; his secret benefactions are enormous. Part of his success has been built up by his genius in using the ability of others and in securing for them greater remuneration than they could have secured without his help. It is not too much to say that he practically doubled the standard of pay for all working journalists. Of course, he is no beneficent all-forgiving angel. He is ruthless where he meets incapacity; he is temperamentally unable to suffer failures gladly.

I should like to conclude this sketch of one of a remarkable man by some words I wrote about him some

few years ago; they are as true to-day as they were then.

I have seen Alfred Harmsworth in many moods, in many circumstances. I worked directly or indirectly under his control for ten years. He remains to me, as I dare say to many others, almost the same bewildering personality as at the beginning. Measure some individual action of Alfred Harmsworth by ordinary standards, and you may get near enough to understand him, or think you understand him. Take one section of his work, and his methods of carrying it out, and you may be able to get a comprehension of his line of thought and impulse. But take the man as a whole and he puzzles and staggers one. Elusive as the winds of summer are his motives. Men of simple mind struggle in vain to gather the impulses which drive him to various courses of action. They will struggle so to the end of the chapter.

Lord Reading, now Lord Chief Justice of England, has played a very strong part during the war, and is playing an equally strong part during the reconstruction period. He has limitations of temperament; he is not a believer of forlorn hopes in spite of the brilliance of his intellect; he never played any special part in the House of Commons, and he has not the flair, the fervour, the abandon which many a man with even part of his gifts would turn to rare account on the public platform; he is no great innovator, strong Liberal though he be. In a word he is not a leader in the big sense of the term, and yet Lord Reading is one of the phenomenal successes of his generation, and his influence on current life, though unseen, is considerable. He helped Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Asquith to frame

the proposals which altered the finance of Britain in the war. His talents secured international appreciation. He was the head of the Anglo-French Commission which went to America, when that country was still a neutral, on the delicate and vital task of arranging loans. As Lord Chief Justice he had much to do with settling what may be called the domestic war legislation for the period of the Conference. Subsequently he stepped down from his seat on the Bench and went to America as special ambassador and High Commissioner to take charge of British interests there, including the operation of a score or more of British commissions coöperating on American soil with the American people for the supply of food, finance, munitions, ships and all the paraphernalia of war. Ten thousand experts were under his hand, and he commanded them with distinguished success; he left a charming impression of himself on the American people.

He is back again now as chief of the English judiciary. While his influence flows out to all quarters with regard to the administration of justice, he remains one of the powers behind the scenes in the government of England. It is one of his special equipments that while he remains the close personal friend of the Prime Minister and his helper in a score of complicated and subtle tasks, he is also on friendly terms with the Prime Minister's chief opponents, and I have no doubt, should occasion demand it, will render them similar service in the cause of his country.

He has had a romantic career. The father of Rufus

Isaacs was a merchant in the city of London, and young Rufus, a handsome, careless stripling, lovable personally but adventurous in his tastes, caused his parents, one has no doubt, some anxious thought. He was ambitious in a harum-scarum way, but his love of action overcame any settled intentions in those early years. He was in a business office, he went to sea, and then in his early twenties he was a clerk on the Stock Exchange. It is recorded that he was not a success on the Stock Exchange although he acquired an amount of knowledge which of later years has been of supreme value. Before he was twenty-five, with a lot of experience behind him he decided on the Law, and at twenty-seven he was admitted a barrister. In England a young barrister has done well if, after ten years of slogging, with a thousand disappointments and intense work, he has secured a moderate competency in the courts. If after twenty years he has reached the position where he can earn three or four thousand pounds a year and "take silk" as it is called—that is to say, enter into the higher grade with the honorary title of King's Counsel—he is one of the successes of his legal generation. Rarely do men under fifty secure this big success. Rufus Isaacs was called to the Bar at twenty-seven; in his early thirties he had already made a reputation for himself as an advocate, and briefs were flowing in upon him. At thirty-five he was the most successful of the "unsilked" barristers throughout the land, and was earning vast fees. No famous case was complete without his assistance. He was a K.C. before

he was forty, and from that time onward a big fortune was at his disposal every year. The first man sought for as a pleader by every wealthy litigant was Rufus Isaacs. His subsequent career has been before the eye of the general public—a brief period as a member of Parliament, then Solicitor-General, Attorney-General, and finally Lord Chief Justice. I attribute his success to three main causes, first, a naturally acute intellect; second, unflinching industry and energy; third, the invaluable gift of fascination.

I saw him when he first essayed to enter Parliament, in North Kensington. He was defeated. He came out of the hall with his wife on his arm, gracious, radiant, with his shoulders back like those of a victor. I have seen him in court fighting battles where his deep and musical voice was one of the outward signs of a pervading magnetism. He never neglected any legitimate help on his way to eminence. Some of his colleagues adopted towards the weaker judges an almost arrogant attitude. Rufus Isaacs was always more courteous and more compliant towards the weakest judge on the bench than he was towards the strongest.

I have seen him in the judgment seat as Lord Chief Justice with a man on trial for his life, and as an Englishman I should have been glad for any foreigner who does not know our institution to have been present on that melancholy occasion. The Lord Chief Justice sought to extract from witnesses every fact and every shade of opinion that could tell in favour of the threatened man. He put points to his counsel, in fact did

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everything possible which human ingenuity could suggest in order to help. I am referring to the case of Roger Casement, a man bearing an honour from the King charged with treason in the midst of a terrible war. The placidity, fairness, and balance of that trial, which lasted many days in London, might have been an object lesson for history. Every person in the crowded court from the judge to the ushers had relations and friends in that terrible conflict. Every one of them was personally subject to injury by day or by night from German aircraft, visiting London and other towns. Ireland had broken out into rebellion. Sir Roger Casement, who had previously served the Government, was accused under direct evidence of trying to induce British soldiers to fight for the Kaiser. In the face of all these facts there was no hint of passion in the prosecution. There was a cold presentation of the facts, and the Lord Chief Justice brought all his talents to bear to find every iota that would tell on behalf of the tragic gentlemanly looking figure in the dock. When the end came, Lord Reading did his duty without flinching. He had no option but to impose the sentence of death, but he did this terrible duty as he had done his duty throughout the trial, with dignity, without emotion and with reasoned words.

Another type of man who plays a great part in English life although he does not appear so often in print as those who hold high official positions, is Lord Leverhulme. William Lever was an apprentice in a grocer's store in the Lancashire town of Bolton—a restless,

thick-set, energetic youth. He presently scraped a little money together and started business for himself in Wigan. He worked morning, noon, and night. The result was that he sold that business for £60,000. He sold it because he saw there were fresh fields to conquer. From dispensing groceries he took to making soap, and his business swept along by leaps and bounds. At this moment his activities reach to every corner of the civilized world. He has hundreds of thousands of employees, and every six months there comes news of some fresh business interest acquired, some new success which has accrued. On the Mersey in Lancashire he has raised a workmen's city which might be a model—artistic cottages set in pretty gardens, and the community provided with theatre, museum, tennis court, cricket ground, and other amenities. Lord Leverhulme's employees partake of the prosperity of the firm, and are given an intimate interest in its progress. A recent writer says, "In the face of every socialistic encouragement the Lever employees refuse to be miserable." The same writer goes on to say:

> Let there be no misunderstanding, he is a famous philanthropist. Only yesterday the papers were full of his princely gift for the purpose of higher education of his native Bolton. And this, of course, is but the latest of a succession of acts of public generosity. But these acts are distinct altogether from his relations with his employees. Here he disowns with some vigour any purpose of philanthropy at all. The conditions under which they work, the surroundings amid which they live, the benefits in which they periodically share, are all based on the most rigid business principles.

There is an ascetic-looking cleric of young middle age, with straight mouth and cold eyes, who has reached newspaper prominence as "The Gloomy Dean." It is the Rev. W. R. Inge, Dean of St. Paul's. He is by no means popular. People are a little afraid of him. And yet his utterances are listened to with eagerness, and anything he writes has a wide circulation. He possesses deep scholarship, and generates on his own account clear cold thoughts, and delivers them with a biting directness which sets nerves ajar. He is so manifestly unjust, say some. A harsh bigot say others. The real truth is that with an acute mind the Dean is unflinchingly sincere, a kind of mental martyr who gives pain to himself as cheerfully as he does to other people. Withal he is a tonic influence, particularly welcome in a world of political flabbiness. Shibboleths are not for him. I put him forward not as representative of a class but as one of the instances of intellectual individualism which are repeatedly breaking forth and which are an essential part of English strength. I quote a few of his sayings:

"That the Labour Movement is economically rotten it is easy to prove."

"There is no law of progress, and civilized society is being destroyed by the passions of men."

"We have seen that democracy—the rule of majorities—has been discredited and abandoned in action though officially we all bow down before it."

"The landed gentry (and in honesty I must add the endowed clergy) are a survival of feudalism, as the capitalist is a survival of industrialism."

"The world's standards are quantitative, those of Christianity are qualitative, and being qualitative spiritual goods are unlimited in amount."

"If women were sufficiently well educated not to care about diamonds the Kimberley mines would pay no dividends and the rents in Park Lane would go down."

"The myth of progress is one form of apocalyptism. In France it began with sentimentalism, developing normally into homicidal mania. In England it took the form of Deuteronomic religion. As a reward for our national virtues our population expanded, our imports and exports went up by leaps and bounds, and our empire received additions every decade. It was plain that when Christ said 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth' He was thinking of the British Empire."

"Everyone can understand that a generation which travels sixty miles an hour must be five times as civilized as one which only travels twelve."

"Our peerage consists largely of parvenus."

"The reluctance of rich and self-indulged women to bear children is undoubtedly a factor in the infertility of the leisured class."

Dean Inge spares no section of society. He does not spare the clergy to which he belongs. He has only one grievance, that he is regarded as a pessimist!

A man of different calibre is Mr. George Bernard Shaw, wit, playwright, amateur philosopher, and occasional politician. He is read probably more largely in America than in his own country, though his work has been popular enough in England to make him a substantial fortune. He exercises a witty sting or tickle as the case may be, and everybody is willing to pay for one sensation or the other. He is a popular entertainer,

a most genial man personally, a writer unsurpassed in probing individual or national weaknesses, and remains under the delusion that people take him seriously. If they did he would be unable to reside in this country after his pamphlet published early in the war in which he ridiculed British statesmen and the British cause, even while he passed a perfunctory judgment on Germany. Mr. Shaw is not a force, but he brightens life. His plays are delightful, his lectures a real joy. He gets some of his effects by a quiet-toned audacity and extravagance but he has a vein of genuine humour. His grave but discriminating patronage of Shakespeare as a writer ("a gentleman of my own profession") is a gem of comedy. On the platform I place him second only to the master of ironic phrase and story, Admiral Sims. Years ago I talked with Mr. Shaw on the announcement that Jim Corbett, the boxer, was to take the principal part in one of his plays to be performed in America. The incongruity of a prize fighter as a principal in a Shaw play was obvious, and I felt sure the author would make some caustic comment. Mr. Shaw was surprised at my surprise. "Why not?" he asked. "A most appropriate choice. Mr. Corbett is at the head of his profession even as I am at the head of mine. What happier combination could there be?"

I have sketched these men not to show national type but national variety. England is a fertile field.

CHAPTER XIX

DRINK, BUREAUCRACY, RELIGION, AND THE HONOURS LIST

A FALLING barometer does not always mean a storm but it suggests the advisability of taking a raincoat with you on an outing. It is well that the English people are adaptable. They may go onward or step back, but they are certainly on the brink of many changes.

England is shying at prohibition though under the pressure of war she went a long way towards it. There were limitations as to the power of purchasing drink in those days. You were not even allowed to pay for the refreshment of a friend at the bar. With the ending of the war some of the restrictions were lifted. There was gloom in the hearts of the teetotallers; a modified joy in the breasts of those who had never been without a modicum of intoxicants. Undoubtedly the lifting of the embargo did away with some inconvenience. I was down in Wales during the war and a white-bearded old Welshman told me with gloomy eye and dry intonation of how the Lloyd George Government, with its drink regulations, was bringing the eminent Welshman at its head into serious discredit with some of his countrymen.

He described how one Welshman met another and persuaded him to come in and have a drink just for company's sake. The friend said he did not need a drink, but at length was persuaded in. Each had a whiskey and soda, and the friend found that he had to pay for his own instead of enjoying hospitality. "One and twopence for a drink I did not want! Damn Lloyd George, and all his works! One and twopence! Damn Lloyd George!"

Drink was lessened in England but England was not made sober by Act of Parliament. Under the stress of emotion all kinds of habits were temporarily changed and the mood of war time perhaps had something to do with the lessened consumption of alcohol. But it is fallacious to assert that the various restrictions were entirely responsible. They had something to do with it. But what had a great deal more to do with it was the fact that several millions of the most energetic men in the country were away fighting.

What are the changes which still remain in operation? Prior to 1914 saloons and public-houses were open in London from five-thirty one morning until one on the following morning every day of the week except Saturday, when they closed at midnight. In provincial towns the hours were from six in the morning until eleven at night, and in rural areas they were from six in the morning until ten at night. During the war the restrictions of the Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) altered this to an extent which could only have been possible under national emergency; and

now after peace has been signed the hours are still limited in comparison with pre-war days. In London the present hours for the sale of alcoholic liquor, though more than the war-time allowance, are from noon until half-past two, and from six-thirty in the evening until ten. The provinces and rural districts are practically the same. So far as the week-end is concerned, there is but one condition—and that concerns off-licenses only—which has much influence on the situation. In off-license houses spirits may not be sold between Friday at 2.30 P.M. and Monday noon; there is, however, one curious qualification to this restriction. If you wish spirits on Fridays or Mondays you may have them, provided they are sent to you "in a horse-drawn vehicle" and dispatched before 9 P.M. on Friday or before noon on Monday.

The reason for this and other curious conditions governing the sale of liquor is, of course, to be found in the fact that the origin of the restriction laws was the war necessity, but there is little likelihood that long "drinking hours" will ever again be part of England's social conditions. Indeed, it may be said that war measures have proved what was previously the subject of long debates in and out of the House of Commons—that a restriction of the hour for the sale of liquor is possible.

The Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) was established in June, 1915, and after local inquiry in many districts, particularly in transport and munition areas, the Board decided to put forward a general policy,

which has, up to the present, been maintained. The measures adopted were four in number:

1. Curtailment of the hours of sale.

2. Facilities for non-alcoholic refreshment, notably by the establishment of canteens for munition and other workers.

3. Prohibition of the sale of spirits of excessive strengths.

4. Prohibition of incentives to excessive consumption, such as treating and credit.

It is difficult to give statistics of the decrease in drunkenness since the restrictions were put in force; but although Lord d'Abernon, chairman of the Board, and his colleagues admit that some considerable part of that reduction may be owing to the absence of men who were on service abroad, they claim this cannot be urged in the case of women, and that the convictions for drunkenness on the part of women have decreased in nearly the same proportion as in the case of men. Against the fact of men being absent, it is claimed that there were increased populations in munition and industrial areas, and past experience showed that high wages and excessive drinking were companions. In the years of restriction this was not the case. Convictions for drunkenness of both sexes in England and Wales in 1913 numbered 190,000. From 1914 the number fell at a pace without parallel in this country, and in 1917 the figure was 46,000.

One has to get behind statistics, however, in regard to social habits, and it is not to be doubted that there

has been a vast resumption of drinking in England since the war. Nevertheless there is less alcohol consumed than before 1914, and the diminution is likely to be permanent, for, with extensive modifications, some of the restrictions will continue. The country wishes this, just as strongly as it wishes for no prohibition. Well-drilled virtue antagonizes an Englishman right away. Freedom is in his marrow, yes freedom to do wrong within certain limits. Unless there are basic changes in the feelings of the English people the government bold enough to try to put prohibition into effect will topple like a house of cards.

From being khaki clad, the nation has become sick of the sight of khaki, which is a natural reaction after a period of anxiety and distress. Even the girls who used to worship an officer's uniform and beamed with pride at getting a young lieutenant to take them to a theatre find no more glamour in the martial equipment. The men themselves, especially those who have done real fighting, have found a welcome change in civilian clothes. They at least have no illusions about war, which to them is no glorious adventure, but at best a terrible necessity full of squalor and brutality, and inevitably marked by influences which leave a depressing effect for a long time, if not for life, on all those who have been subject to them. They smile with deep-seated knowledge at romantic tales in the newspapers of heroes who have known no fear, of soldiers always eager to go over the top, and of wounded men only too anxious to return to the front. They have one

expressing word for all these things, and that word is "guff." They know better than all the writers and the politicians that the true bravery of our race, as of all races, was demonstrated in the men who went forward in spite of the fact that they were afraid. There are millions of young war veterans in England now and they are a bulwark for defence of the country for years to come, but they are also a bulwark against aggression by any militaristic clique which raises its head, for England has her militaristic cliques like every other country, some who are politicians, some soldiers, and some who are a mixture of both. It is in this spiritual revolt against the war that the Labour movement has drawn much of its recent strength.

One result of the legitimate causes of the loosening of human passions in war time has been the outbreak here and there since the peace of all kinds of violence, of murders, of hold-up robberies. All classes were swept into the common ranks, among them, of course, the desperate men held in check by law and custom, but who on the battle field tasting blood found themselves encouraged to think little of human life, and who, once more back in the realms of peace, found it easier than heretofore to take risks, to use the weapons, material and mental, with which they had been armed during the four years of conflict. It is but a passing phase, and one which is probably experienced by every country engaged in the war.

Another and a different kind of unpleasant result is to be found in the increased number of divorce cases in

the Law Courts. It is not easy to get a divorce in England, and the number of divorces are even now very small compared to those in countries where the laws permit of easier release. Infidelity on the part of the woman is the principal cause of most of the present cases, infidelity resulting in the majority of cases from the temptations put in the woman's way by members of the non-fighting male population left behind. Co-respondents of this kind are being dealt with very severely by the judges, with the entire approbation of the community. Here again one sees but a passing incidental effect of the war.

Bureaucracy naturally flourished during the time when all people were placed at the disposal of the State, and when officials had to be created at a rate and in a degree hitherto unthought of. Here is an extract from the comments of a casual observer, and although it perhaps goes a little beyond the mark, nevertheless gives a pretty accurate idea of the state of things in England:

Mr. Sealing Wax, Mr. Red Tape, Mr. Buff Form, Mr. O. H. M. S.—these are the people who conduct the affairs, external and internal, of the United Kingdom.

It is the Bureaucratic Department which controls the Minister, not the other way about. Ministers usually never have anything but the haziest knowledge of the functions of the departments of which they are the titular heads. The permanent staffs do pretty much what they like. It is they who reply to criticisms of their work in Parliament. It is they who pile mystery on mystery. The offenders sit in judgment upon themselves.

The Ministry of Food, the Ministry of Labour, the

Ministry of Munitions, the Ministry of Shipping, the Ministry of Transport—these are samples of the Greater Bureaucracy now fighting for their lives with every device known to the permanent official. The public call upon them to justify their existence. They simply don't. The overthrow of this Bureaucracy will be a difficult proceeding. The new Bureaucrats are well dug in. Most of the Ministers of State now in office are the parents of the newer Bureaucracy. They have created Departments with plethoric lists of directors, sub-directors, assistants, inspectors, clerks, and typists, and display an unseemly pride in their offspring. They hold them up to the admiration of the world as a proud mother exhibits her child to adoring relatives. In the work of administration incompetence should not be overlooked and tolerated, simply because a man passed an examination. But that is Bureaucracy.

These new bureaucrats were numbered by the tens of thousands. A good many of them will cling to office for years to come. They are parasites, of course, most of them who by the luck of their connections, by wheedling or by some incidental association with a special business, secured a hold during the war. Some went in on the plea of patriotism with an eye on a title; others thought only of monthly salary. Most of them have secured some measure of the reward they set their hearts on, which goes to show that England, whatever her difficulties, is a grateful and generous nation. For these new bureaucrats and a host of other people outside who wanted some kind of recognition there was created a new order of nobility, the Order of the British Empire, with varying grades. The lower grades given indifferently to stenographers, smaller

functionaries, tiny contractors, comedians, parish councillors and local mayors, were scattered broadcast with a munificence which has provided *Punch* with weekly jokes ever since. The O.B.E. eventually causes people to smile—except, of course, those people who were the recipients of it. *Punch* advised any person who had not the O.B.E. to apply at once at the retail section of the Honours Department in order that the omission might be immediately rectified.

There is little difference in the churches. While the majority of the population give a nominal assent to Christianity, an earnest minority go to church or chapel on Sunday and have some effect in leavening the feeling of people generally. Beneath a surface of indifference or a certain disbelief as the case may be, there runs an essentially religious spirit—only occasionally translated into church-going habits or definitely stated creeds. Conventions, in many cases degenerating into mere crusts of words, cover ingrained habits and instincts which make first and foremost for the sanctity of family life, for honest dealing in work or labour, and a kindliness for those who cannot help themselves. I think that is the religion of England, although its manifestation in worship is scant enough when one takes the attendance at the churches in comparison with the numbers of the population. It is the women who mostly go to church. But the influence of the women permeates the lives of the men certainly as much as in any other country, and certainly more than in most, although Englishmen are a little shy of acknowledging

it. The crises of life and death daily met by tens of thousands during the war brought men up against spiritual experiences not before encountered. Hidden lessons of youth, hidden influences of mother, wife or sister had their effect. And so it happens that there is less evasion with regard to religion, more sympathy perhaps with the outward forms of it than existed before the war. All this goes with the outbreaks of crime which I have mentioned as a sequel to the great conflict. The churches did not shine very much during the war. No burning words came from the pulpit, no great personality shone forth as a prophet, and it has to be confessed that the mind of ordinary man or woman, consciously or unconsciously, felt that the church was more or less a failure. But that has nothing to do with what may be called the inherent religion of human beings. There is latent more than a touch of puritanism in the British. It triumphs in their life as much in spite of preachers and teachers as because of them. The war acted on hundreds of thousands of humans as a great emotion acts on the life of an individual; here and there warping, here and there ennobling, sometimes crucifying and at other times lifting to exaltation. There are no great spiritual leaders in England. There is no lack of spirituality in the common people, and the best manifestation of it is seen not in public life, not in daily workshops, but in the home.

CHAPTER XX

THE SAFEGUARDS OF SPORT AND A SENSE OF HUMOUR

OBVIOUS dangers in public life stare England in the face just now but there are some good lively influences in the background, permanent ones, likely to be regarded with indifference by the severe and serious minds who see in politics the origins of action instead of the forced consequences of common moods among ordinary people. Why should not Parliament adjourn over Derby Day? I regard it as a healthy sign, though I have no interest in racing. Laughter and fresh air, the sunshine on the grassy downs, the exhilaration of physical contest, an excursion to the unaccustomed, the excitement of a small bet, the infectious jollity of big open-air crowds on a periodical outing—these are at least as important for joy in life as the unbroken course of righteous abstractions. The English people are not passionate theorists. They would not make progress as they generally do by compromise among themselves, if they were. Let it be confessed at once, there is a tremendous lot of human nature in the English—even the most eminent of them. And however disappointing that may be to preachers and teachers it provides one of the reasons for hope for the future. If it were possible to secure a consensus of

frank information as to the interests of the general population from those who really know, say from newspaper editors and doctors, then the politicians, the authors and others of their kidney would get some horrible shocks. There would be much unjustifiable depression. There would also be some exaltation among the wiser observers of life as a whole.

Denunciations are rising to the skies about England's devotion to sport, which is now being manifested with an enthusiasm never before reached. No sane person would deny that the love for outdoor sports may be carried to excess, as may the love for any other kind of ingenious activity—say political intrigue, for example. I daresay a great deal of harm results to individuals from continuous betting on race-courses. The tens of thousands who cease work in the shipyards and factories to go to a football match may be doing themselves and their country some injury. The hard-working young shopman and clerks, the more leisured undergraduates at Oxford and Cambridge who strain themselves towards an overdevelopment of physique so that they may conquer their competitors, are possibly penalizing their future health. A hundred objections can very properly be raised to some phases of the present boom in sport. Nevertheless they only touch the fringe.

Sport as the English understand it is by way of being an adventure of the body or the spirit or both. It calls for admiration of the strong and the swift and the skilful, and who will say the combination does not make

for beauty? To be efficient needs a healthy life, for the debauched are quickly out of the running. Could a man who drank reach first-class football? Observe the virile men tanned and glowing with health who play in county cricket. Who can wonder at the idolatry of boys and girls for the clear-skinned easy-moving young giants who row for Oxford and Cambridge? These classes are of the best, it is true, but it is from that very fact they exercise their influence, and become a mark for emulation.

There has been an enormous accretion of interest in sport since the war—in some respects a rebound from four years of emptiness, and truly illustrative at the same time of national temperament. One noteworthy fact is that enthusiasm is not fettered to any particular exercise. While the race-courses are crowded, the football grounds have never known such throngs. By the way, it is nonsense to cry out that the gambling impulse is responsible: at a ground outside London yesterday, despite a hundred other big metropolitan attractions there were forty thousand spectators of a Rugby football match, and at a Rugby game betting is to all intents and purposes unknown. It was on the same afternoon that tens of thousands were on the banks of the Thames between Putney and Mortlake watching the practice of Oxford and Cambridge for the boat race to take place a few days hence. A million people, at a moderate estimate, will witness the race itself and it is safe to say that ninety-nine out of every hundred will not dream of making a bet. No, no, the

English sporting impulse is infinitely deeper and wider than is to be accounted for by a tendency to gamble. Yesterday was a warm spring Saturday, and I think I shall be within the mark in saying that a tenth of the male population between childhood and old age were watching or taking a hand in sport of some kind or other. That number will not be lessened as the days lengthen and summer comes, for while some sports alternate others are permanent, and anyway the great brotherhood remains. One sphere moulds into the other. There is rowing and cricket and hockey and lawn tennis and boxing and foot races and jumping and cross country running and swimming and lacrosse and football and a dozen other activities all knitted together by a common spirit. I know it has been said we are in danger of becoming a nation of spectators, enervated by indulgence in witnessing the exploits of our specialists. A fallacy if ever there was one. Let the doubter turn an eye on our public parks and commons on summer evenings and observe the myriads of young people, not only enjoying themselves but trying to make themselves deft if not expert in the varying games. Let him see the masters from the elementary schools in their spare time on Saturday acting as coaches or referees in football for bands of their boys. Let him take note of the athletic clubs attached to the big stores and business houses, clubs numbering their hundreds of members, clerks, salesmen, porters, the majority of whom two or three evenings a week either in the gymnasium or on the racing track are steadily

and continuously striving for bodily strength, endurance, and skill. And these are but instances of a national trend. No doubt among the huge attendances at big sporting events there is to be found what may be called the gladiatorial element of interest. It is not the principal one.

In this love of sport in its various forms, in the steady effort to excel there may be as much advantage to the character to the people as there is benefit to their physical welfare. During their striving—in whatever form of game—the English rigidly uphold the essentials of restraint and chivalry. To win is not so important as the way in which the victory is won. I was present in the crowded gathering when Carpentier the French fighter knocked senseless Beckett the hope of England, and when, after a deep breath, that gathering of ardent Englishmen broke into an overwhelming storm of cheering for the opponent who was at once clever, brave, and gentlemanly. The prostrate Beckett showed signs of reviving, and Carpentier was quickly bending over him with help, then gently lifting him and carrying him to a seat. The cheers burst forth again in even deeper note than before, for the English love a clean and gracious sportsman.

It is not in externals but in the spirit of England that there resides the fate of the future. In the field of sport, despite the goody-goody pessimists, I find some part of that spirit with its promise for coming days.

There are qualities which while they have no ostensible relationship are yet, when born of a common stock,

the sign of germinating vitality. That is why I couple a love of sport with a sense of humour. A nation which possesses both is rich in possibilities.

It is sometimes said there is no humour that matters in this land. Alas, poor England, if that were really so, for vision would be gone, and balance, and self-judgment, and much of English joy of life! There is a wide range of stupid people here as elsewhere, and freely is it admitted that a stupid Englishman is very trying indeed, if only for the reason that he is particularly insensible to his deficiencies. But that only throws into relief the fact that we are in essence a humorous people, though a little timorous in revealing the trait, and often preferring to laugh inwardly, a chuckle being our favourite outward signal. A trickling kind of business is our English humour, but it is a pervading influence enlivening the nooks and crannies as well as the broad highway.

"What would you say if you heard you had won the Victoria Cross?" asked an officer of that shaggy, middle-aged, walrus-moustached warrior known as "Bill" in the "Better 'Ole," and Bill responded in as emphatic rising and falling intonation with a long and drawn out "Ul-lo." In Bill's reply and the manner of it you get one side of truly English humour. Irrelevance is the framework. To seem unmoved in all circumstances is a birthright of Englishmen high and low, and thus a wilful unemphasis serves often to make a point by itself. That is only one of the constituent parts in this particular brand of humour which has a

strong family resemblance to that of Sam Weller, a typical and high-class Englishman in some respects. Dickens, broad and vague as he often was, nevertheless faithfully represented the underlying spirit and embodied it in matchless characters like Micawber and the immortal "Samivel."

The war produced cross currents, disturbing the benevolence of English humour, but the easy way in which Tommy adapted ghastliness to meet the situation carries its own lesson of English imperturbability as the basis of comedy. A spy was caught in the front lines and sent to the rear with a sergeant and a shooting party for execution. Through morasses of mud and pools of water, across ploughed fields and over wearisome shell holes the little party ploughed its course. "Why put me through this preliminary cruelty?" asked the spy. "It's perfectly horrible to suffer this." "What about us?" said the English sergeant indignantly. "We've got to come back through it all again."

It is not abroad that one often finds English allusiveness, but I have to say here that I have come across no better exemplification of the Dickensian spirit than in a messenger boy attached to the editorial office of a famous New York newspaper. A London review editor, by way of being a celebrity, called to see the chief of the American paper in question. The English visitor was tall and thin and, as became a leader of thought, there was mingled in his aspect severe asceticism with lofty abstraction. He was pale and fair-

haired. You might have guessed he was eminent and you would have known for a certainty that he had been a teetotaller all his life. The messenger boy was instructed to take him to the street and point out to him the direction for the railway station. The boy was gone a long time, and when he returned was challenged for his length of absence. His defence was complete, not to say overwhelming. "I looked at the guy," he said, "and after I had looked at him it seemed to me I ought to take him right along to the subway station to put him on the platform." Somewhere, generations back, that boy's progenitors had English blood in their veins.

It is a standing joke with Americans that the English have no sense of humour, and the Englishman, when he has the courage, sometimes responds in kind. The truth is that English and American humour travel along somewhat different paths. I have, before this, told the story of a New York dinner at which I was present, but it will stand telling again. A witty American friend of England, who had lived some time in this country, related how Mr. Nat. Goodwin, the actor, during a stay in London, told some particular Englishman of his experience with a cigar salesman. In recommending a special brand of cigars the salesman said that the purchaser of 500 cigars received a leather wallet, the purchaser of a thousand got a watch, and the man who took ten thousand received a grand piano. The actor's reply to the cigar salesman was: "If I smoked ten thousand of your cigars it would not

be a grand piano I should want but a harp." Nat. Goodwin said this example of his repartee was received by the Englishman with a polite smile. It was the next day that the Englishman sought out Nat. Goodwin, shook him warmly by the hand, and said, "You know I only caught the meaning of that joke last night in bed. I could hardly sleep for laughing. Of course what you meant was that travelling round the country as you do as an actor you could not carry a grand piano with you, whereas you could take a harp along quite easily." After the merriment caused by this tale had died away an English correspondent, sitting by my side, showed signs of restiveness, and presently he said, "I want to get up and make a speech." I asked him his reason. He said, "I want to explain that there is no lack of courtesy in Englishmen when they don't laugh at American jokes. I personally have sometimes tried for as long as twenty minutes to laugh at an American joke; I want to show there is no ill-feeling."

American humour has a sparkle and a glitter, and English humour is distinguished, if one may change the metaphor, by its flavour ranging from the mellow to the bitter sweet. It is a developed humour. It is not particularly obvious. The best English humour leaves a good deal to the imagination and if one is not possessed of that imagination, of a certain perspective, of a knowledge of the medium in which the artist works, why then the verdict is that the English have no sense of humour.

Would-be superior people sneer at *Punch*, but *Punch*

remains a standard of the English humour. I think nine out of ten educated Englishmen abroad would say that they prefer the weekly issue of *Punch* to any other regular publication, to give them the sense and the meaning and the import of all that is going on at home. Pages of letterpress could not convey what is happening in England so well as some of the half-page drawings in *Punch* with a couple of sentences in the shape of explanation beneath them. In England at the present time newly rich profiteers throughout the country are indulging in all kinds of rather crude display. Billiards is a very popular indoor game, especially in the clubs. To say that you have a billiard room at home is one way of bragging of your establishment because of a full-sized billiard room to take a table 12 feet by 6 feet means an apartment quite beyond the range of the ordinary middle-class householder. The real billiard player, moreover, knows that the game can only be played properly on the full-sized table and regards the cheap abbreviations as toys largely used by women and children. All this explanation in view of an example in *Punch* a week or two ago. One of the newly-rich, anxious to show off, had invited a young man-about-town to dine with him. After dinner he was with ostentatious pride taking the guest round. The half-page drawing in *Punch* presents the stout and pompous host in dinner jacket, with a wide expanse of shirt front, puffing a huge cigar, as he opens the door of a room and displays a miniature billiard table about 5 feet by 2½ feet.

Beneath the picture are the words of the host in the shape of the query "Fond of billiards?" That is all. A more perfect example of grandiloquence and pomposity it would be hard to find, and at the same time it represents a trait which has been increasingly manifest in the country since the war.

There is not much grimness in English humour, although occasionally its message is conveyed in painful fashion. That master pessimist, Thomas Hardy, gave us an example in "Far from the Madding Crowd" when Farmer Oak's sheep dog, under a sense of duty, drove two hundred sheep over the precipice and brought his master to the brink of ruin and then went and licked his hand seeking recognition of a task efficiently performed.

Of a different kind, but still specially English was Meredith's humour at once so brilliantly polished and so parenthetical. There is an example in the "Egoist." Willoughby Patterne, a young aristocrat in his country house, is informed of the existence of one, Lieutenant Crossjay Patterne, of a corps of the famous hard fighters who had performed an act of heroism of the unpretending cool sort which kindles British blood. There is a description of how the hero sought to visit your Sir Willoughby.

He was one afternoon parading between showers on the stately garden terrace of the Hall, in company with his affianced, the beautiful and dashing Constantia Durham, followed by knots of ladies and gentlemen vowed to fresh air before dinner, while it was to be had. Chancing with his

usual happy fortune (we call these things dealt to us out of the great hidden dispensary, chance) to glance up the avenue of limes, as he was in the act of turning on his heel at the end of the terrace, and it should be added, discoursing with passion's privilege of the passion of love to Miss Durham, Sir Willoughby, who was anything but obtuse, experienced a presentiment upon espying a thick-set stumpy man crossing the gravel space from the avenue to the front steps of the Hall, decidedly *not* bearing the stamp of the gentleman "on his hat, his coat, his feet, or anything that was his" Willoughby subsequently observed to the ladies of his family in the Scriptural style of gentlemen who do bear the stamp. His brief sketch of the creature was repulsive. The visitor carried a bag, and his coat-collar was up, his hat was melancholy; he had the appearance of a bankrupt tradesman absconding; no gloves, no umbrella.

As to the incident we have to note, it was very slight. The card of Lieutenant Patterne was handed to Sir Willoughby, who laid it on the salver, saying to the footman: "Not at home."

Humour persists in cockney circles as it did in the days of Dickens. A real Dickens tale in which he would have revelled is that of the two rival omnibus drivers and the encounter between them just before horse omnibuses gave place entirely to motor vehicles. A passenger on the top of one omnibus noticed the driver make a motion with his whip as he passed a colleague on another omnibus. The second driver broke into profusion of highly offensive language. "What is the matter with him?" asked the passenger on the first omnibus. "Oh," said the driver, "he ain't got no sense of humour, that's what's the matter with him. See me

jerk my whip up and down. His brother was hung yesterday. He ain't got no sense of humour."

A colleague of mine in the Press Gallery of the House of Commons in the early stage of the war, after a late sitting of Parliament, could not find a taxicab and had to take one of the old hansoms to his suburban home in the early hours of the morning. He lived in a street of highly respectable appearance consisting of semi-attached villas each of which, in accordance with the genteel custom of the suburbs, carried a name as well as a number. His particular house was entitled "Chesham." On arrival he paid the cabman a moiety over his legal fare, say 6d. The cabman at that early hour of the morning felt himself entitled to a good deal more, and with the money in his extended palm, he said in raw expostulation: "'Ere, what do you call this?" My friend, whose ancestry was Scotch, looked at the irate cabman with determination. "You have your legal fare," he said, "and something over, and now you can take me to the nearest Police Station and we will settle the matter." The cabman looked at the coin in his hand, looked at the house and its title, and for five seconds went through a maelstrom of emotion. Then he said in accents of scorn which it is impossible to reproduce in the written word, "Gawd blimy, 'CHESHAM,' Gawd blimy. Come on, old girl." He flicked his horse with the whip, and off he went.

The British Parliament has humour because it has personality, and because the lighter touches are helped by the grave and formal historic setting of the pro-

ceedings. Audaciously apt phrasing is of course a weapon here as elsewhere in serious assemblies, but it has to be sharply pointed to make its effect in a gathering where cheapness is received with chilly silence. I remember how in the days when Mr. Balfour, the then leader of the Conservative party, was sitting on the fence with regard to Tariff Reform, while the great body of his supporters were urgently and ardently pushing the programme forward and the Liberals in power were strongly defending Free Trade. The skill and agility with which Mr. Balfour maintained his personal and political balance was the subject of both admiration and exasperation. One fateful night his first lieutenant, Mr. Chamberlain, a strong protectionist, made a somewhat indiscreet speech in which he committed his party and his chief. He was followed in debate by Mr. T. M. Kettle, a witty young Irishman. He paid a tribute to Mr. Chamberlain's devotion to his political cause. "And to-night, Mr. Speaker, he has gone further. He has nailed his leader to the mast."

It was in another Tariff Reform debate that Mr. Lloyd George evidenced his peculiar aptitude. He was President of the Board of Trade at the time, and he had to wind up for the Government a full dress debate in which proposals for Tariff Reform had been put forward by the opposition. There was a good deal of heat in the discussion and the orator suffered some interruptions, to which he made biting retorts. He had been challenged as to his facts with regard to the conditions of working-class life in Germany, where it was said a

good many had to eat horse flesh largely on account of a protective policy. Mr. Lloyd George defended himself by quoting from the report of the British Consul General in Germany, emphasizing the fact that it was not his report but the report of an impartial official. I forget the actual figures he gave but they do not bear upon the incident. "Let us take the manufacturing town of Chemnitz," said Mr. Lloyd George. "In Chemnitz last year there was consumed ten thousand tons of horse flesh and this in a Tariff Reform paradise." (Cheers and counter cheers.) "And not only horse flesh, Mr. Speaker. In this haven of political and social delight where Tariff Reform is in full bloom, 2,000 tons of dog flesh was consumed." (Uproarious cheers and fierce counter cheers.) Mr. Lloyd George swung his fore-finger along the line of opposition, including Mr. Austin Chamberlain, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Bonar Law and others. "Not only dogs' flesh but, and the fact has a tragic significance for the gentlemen facing me, a thousand tons of donkey meat was eaten in this place where Tariff Reform was in operation." At this the proceedings of the House of Commons were perforce suspended for an interval of at least two minutes.

The Lobby of the Commons is one of the homes of good stories, most of which, however, never get into print. I give one example. There was a young boisterous, good-natured, noisy member named Lord Winterton. He was twenty-four years of age and his transparent sincerity and inexperience secured for him benevolent toleration which would not have been ex-

tended to an older, hardier and less hearty soul. He was the son of an Irish Peer and Irish peers can sit in the House of Commons, and so it came about that when Lord Turnour, the father of Lord Winterton, died, the young man became Lord Turnour and had to sit in the House of Commons under his new name. One day Lord Turnour was travelling up from Brighton to London and entered into conversation with a fellow passenger for the journey. When within a few miles of Victoria, Lord Turnour incidentally told his companion his name. "Lord Turnour," said the man in surprise, "you don't mean to say you are Lord Turnour! Do you know all the time I have been talking to you I have been under the impression that you were that blankety fool, Lord Winterton."

I think the best illustration of English humour in action without words that I know is provided by a journalistic episode within my knowledge. A ship with troops returning from active service in a distant part was coming into Plymouth. The story of these particular soldiers was especially interesting and had some importance also in its bearing on war operations in general. One of the leading papers was fortunate enough to have a correspondent on board who was thus enabled to get an elaborate and complete description written on the voyage to England. Other papers who sent men down to Plymouth to meet the ship would inevitably be hours behind in securing copy. The favoured journal arranged to send out a launch to meet the ship and for the correspondent on board

to cork up his manuscript in a bottle and fling it overboard for the launch to pick up. As the ship would take some time to dock it was obvious that this procedure would put the other correspondents waiting on shore at a disadvantage in the matter of time. Everything would have gone well but for one fact, which was that the correspondent on board had told of his plans to the soldiers returning in high spirits to their native land. As the launch approached the incoming ship the correspondent with his bottle was at the side. The soldiers were crowding to the deck to watch the incident. They were also to take a hand in it. When the correspondent threw his bottle overboard at least a hundred of the soldiers also threw overboard bottles carefully corked, and the consequence was that in the rippling sea the launch was trying to find one bottle out of scores of others of all shapes and sizes all of them containing carefully rolled up sheets of paper.

One of the humourists of the journalistic profession is Lord Northcliffe. It will be said that this quality of his takes special forms, sometimes not altogether pleasing, but at any rate many incidents can be given in which he has been ready to start the laugh against himself. A child was run over by an automobile in one of the country districts not far from London, the automobile speeding away to avoid arrest. Lord Northcliffe through the *Daily Mail* instituted a campaign to find the missing man and not only had a search organization set afoot in the district, but put in his paper an offer of one hundred pounds reward for information

which would bring the man to notice. Day after day this was given prominence. Then came an extraordinary revelation. The car was proved to belong to the brother of Lord Northcliffe, Mr. Hilderbrand Harmsworth. It had been taken out without Mr. Harmsworth's knowledge or consent by an unauthorized driver. Needless to say the story was brought to an abrupt conclusion in the *Daily Mail*. Fleet Street chuckled a great deal over the matter. The hundred pounds reward was the kernel of the joke. Some weeks later a tragedy occurred in a railway tunnel on one of the Southern lines, a girl's body being found by the side of the track with some indications that she had been flung out of the passing train by an assailant. All the forces of the *Daily Mail* were brought to bear to track the murderer and at a conference a departmental manager suggested that a reward should be offered, say a reward of £100. "A reward of a hundred pounds," said Lord Northcliffe thoughtfully. "Yes, but where was my brother Hilderbrand that evening?"

CHAPTER XXI

WHERE ENGLAND LEADS

ENGLAND had reason for pride in her endurance and her eventual success in the war, but she has at least as much reason to be proud of her action and development in the troublous times of peace which have followed the fighting. She is still in the midst of heavy difficulties and there are dangers all round her. It is conceivable that disaster lies ahead. And yet England is emerging as a nation in the van of peaceful progress, that progress being both material and idealistic. England plods along, and to use an old phrase is rather inclined to "muddle through." Unknown to herself, she has an unnameable spirit which animates her main activities and takes her on towards a goal unseen and almost unthought of. No one has yet defined that particular spirit in any form of words. It is an instinct, the character and purport of which can only be comprehended by results. It will sound strangely in the ears of foreigners that ancient aristocratic England, proverbially, though not quite accurately, described as slow-minded and slow in action, and very truly described as impregnated with conservative tendencies—that this England should be leading

the world in the progressive development of government, government for all the people of the community, and not just for some favoured sections of it. He is indeed an optimist who believes that any country at any time will secure anything beyond a relative equality of treatment for all its people, or will be able to eliminate entirely the chance which makes some individuals and some classes favoured beyond others. But in so far as human ingenuity and the better impulses of human nature can devise methods under which a real commonwealth can be established and a real chance, physically, mentally, and spiritually, given to every individual who is born into the community, England is in the forefront.

The English are described often by varying commentators as hypocritical, reserved, modest, tenacious, greedy, artful, proud, supercilious, patronizing. I daresay they have got a touch of all the tendencies indicated, but any one of these descriptions and all of them combined fail to get anywhere near that English temperament which has lifted her to eminence not in the realm of force but in the realm of spirit. I suppose some people will smile at the idea of slow-moving material-minded England being eminent in the realm of spirit. Let us look at the facts as they have been manifested in the last few years.

At the outbreak of the war England had a small standing army, and though her Navy was highly efficient and comprised a large number of ships, the actual total of sailors was not very large as fighting forces go

in these days. The call to arms, like the call to arms in any country, was responded to with vigour and enthusiasm by the young men of the country. Everybody thought the war would be over in a few months—everybody, that is, except experts like Lord Kitchener. It is pretty obvious that the belief of a short war was not confined to England, both France and Germany from their different points of view anticipating a brief and decisive conflict. The war went on, and dragged out from weeks to months. The glamour departed. The news of the deaths of fighters came to thousands of families. Tens of thousands of mutilated men came back, some of them to go to hospitals in the hope of recovery, others to suffer for the rest of their lives. Tales of horror from the trenches circulated all over the land. There were no illusions left as to the glorious excitements of glorious war. And still the recruits kept coming forward. True it is that eventually conscription had to be established. But before that stage was reached something like four million British subjects had voluntarily joined up to fight for their country. I know it may be said that other nations in the same position would have achieved a similar result, but as a matter of hard fact England was the one country which put the matter to the test, and we may be permitted a passing doubt as to whether four million volunteers would have been forthcoming from any other nation. Does that prove England to be militaristic? I think it proves exactly the opposite thing. Subsequent happenings strengthen this belief. In the spring of 1920,

conscription for England was abolished. Conscription has been described as one of the real causes of war, and that is probably a true description, in spite of the admitted necessity of conscription for defensive purposes in certain instances. At any rate England has taken the lead among all the nations in the war, indeed among all the nations of the world, in doing away with forced military service, and she will again as in the past depend upon the courage and initiative of her people in the time of danger rather than upon the organizing in advance, of that people as a community of military fighters. If that is not taking a step forward in civilization, possibly at some risk to herself, I should like to know what it is to be called? And be it observed, it is not our political chiefs nor our military commanders who are responsible for this, but the people of England at large. We do not want militarism in this country. Any Government which proposed to continue conscription as a prominent feature would inevitably be thrown out of office in a very short time. Clever statesmen are not slow to sense the feeling of the public in such a matter although, human nature being what it is, those same statesmen will certainly endeavour to take a share of the credit. There is very little credit due to them about it, and this abolition of conscription by England is the more notable in view of the fact that at the Peace Conference British representatives fought hard for the general wiping out of compulsory military service. They fought with no success. Mr. Churchill in a recent speech observed that the following countries, among others,

retained compulsory service and apparently had no intention of departing from it:

France.	Holland.
Italy.	Denmark.
Japan.	Rumania.
Spain.	Greece.
Portugal.	Poland.
Switzerland.	Yugo-Slavia.
Norway.	Czecho-Slovakia.
Sweden.	United States.

The only other nation to abolish conscription has been Germany, and she has done it under compulsion. At the time of the Armistice we had on the whole the strongest army in the world, and our army at the present time is weaker than the army of Belgium. In these facts there is certainly some evidence that England is to the fore in carrying out the purposes and ideals which are among the primary tenets of civilization.

Closely associated with the movement for reduction of armaments in which England has taken the lead is the effort in support of the League of Nations. Amusement supervenes on bewilderment at the news that there are any responsible people in the United States who seriously think that Britain espoused the idea of the League for national aggrandizement, or for the purpose of safeguarding her present possessions, or indeed, for any selfish purpose whatever, except that of preserving peace for herself as well as for other countries. America conceived the idea of the League of Nations, and England nursed it with assiduity and constant care.

True, there were a few who belittled the plan, but practically every politician of importance was forced by public opinion into an open endorsement, and the very best among our public men gave their wholehearted enthusiasm towards making the League a reality and making it powerful and practicable. I need hardly mention the names of Lord Grey, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Asquith, and without exception the whole of the Leaders of the Labour movement. Who, knowing these men can for one moment conceive that their purposes are what may be called selfishly imperialistic? Does any reasonable being tolerate for a second the notion that such men as these are concerned principally with aggressively building up the military and naval power of England against other countries, with increasing it and intensifying it to the point of jingoism? Is it to be credited that these men are thrusting the League of Nations into the forefront of all political considerations with the idea at the back of their minds that England will thus secure the support of other countries in resisting a rebellion in Ireland? The mere statement of the suggestion is enough to dispel it, at least in the mind of any one who has even a fragmentary knowledge of this nation. England will look for help from no other country with regard to Ireland. England, as manifested by her military reduction, by her abolition of conscription, is not merely in spirit but in form the most active community in steps against mere military or naval power. She is passionately desirous of walking away from the atmosphere of war

rather than of walking towards it. Noticeably lukewarm towards the League of Nations are the handful of jingoes, the people who see Heaven-sent government in military rule. It is freely recognized here that America may have special objections to the form of the League of Nations which has been proposed, and it may be added that England while at first somewhat staggered by the opposition which was displayed, has come to see that America with her special position, her special interests, her special form of government, was perfectly within her rights in demanding an adjustment. There is great confidence that America in her own way and in her own time will be the real comrade and helper of England in this matter, but meanwhile by the force of circumstances England is in the position of leader both in action and in theory with regard to the prevention of war in the future.

No one can doubt that there are dangers to the body politic in the present trend of industrial action in England. Revolutions, peaceful or otherwise, may turn out highly advantageous to succeeding generations, but they nearly always carry with them discomfort, disadvantages, and sometime disaster to the people who make up the nation at the time. It is a matter of guesswork as to how events are going to develop here in the immediate future. The character of the people does not lend itself to the supposition of any violent overthrow of society as it has been known hitherto. There are, nevertheless, disquieting signs. But when all the difficulties have been squarely faced and when all the

possible perils have been taken into account, there remains the underlying fact that the changes, whether they be gradual or swift, whether they be accomplished by constitutional means or by more radical methods, have their root in the sense of social justice present in all countries, but more developed in England than elsewhere. Thinkers of all shades in every country are of a common mind with regard to the necessity or at least the desirability of improving the lot of the mass of men and women, unfavoured by fortune, by heritage of goods, or by special ability, or disfavoured by the operations of industry, or environment. There is diversity of method for accomplishing the great end. There are tremendous interests at work against beneficent processes, interests associated with wealth, selfishness, ambition, or stupidity. Too slowly has progress been made hitherto. Now England is the first to plough new fields. The seeds to be sown, the crop to result, will have lessons for all humanity. There are hazards in all progressive movements, and England occupies the post of honour as well as of danger.

Let it not be thought that in the general movement towards better conditions, towards the reconstruction of society, that England is entirely dependent on the sporadic impulsive movement of party politics, or public impulse as demonstrated in electoral operations. I have just received from the Ministry of Labour a blue-covered book of ninety pages which sets out clearly and factfully the continuing development in ordered and set fashion of the growth of coöperative

effort between employers and employees in the production of a new England. It has no connection with political effort. Before the war there were in operation as a result of legislation in Mr. Asquith's Government a limited number of what were called Trade Boards, consisting of representatives of employers and work people in the varying trades, and since the war these Trade Boards have been supplemented by two other kinds of organizations called, respectively, Industrial Councils and Reconstruction Committees. The three bodies between them cover ninety-three trades and occupations of widely differing character. Among those represented are the printers, sugar workers, wool workers, glove makers, embroidery workers, bakers, boot makers, millers, quarry men, and altogether the workers represented number about five million. The bodies I have mentioned are working smoothly and with great effects. A bald official statement gives the function and scope of each:

JOINT STANDING INDUSTRIAL COUNCILS.—These Councils carry into effect the proposals of the Whitley Report, which have been approved by the Government. They are established only in occupations in which both the employers and the employees are well organized in their respective associations, and they consist of equal numbers of representatives of associations of employers and Trade Unions. The basis of representation through associations and trade unions is similarly adhered to in the case of Councils which cover government and municipal establishments and public or semi-public services, and the general principles of the Whitley Report are applied as far as practicable in all cases. The

general function of the Joint Industrial Councils is to secure the largest possible measure of joint action between employers and work-people for the development of the industry which they represent as a part of national life and for the improvement of the conditions of all engaged in the industry; and it is open to Councils to take any action that falls within the scope of this general definition. Among their more specific objects may be mentioned the regular consideration of wages, hours, and working conditions in the industry as a whole; the consideration of measures for regularizing production and employment; the consideration of the existing machinery, and the establishment of machinery where it does not already exist, for the settlement of differences between different parties and sections in the industry with the object of securing the speedy settlement of difficulties; the collection of statistics and information on matters appertaining to the industry; the encouragement of the study of processes and design and of research, with a view to perfecting the products of the industry; the improvement of the health conditions obtaining in the industry and the provision of special treatment where necessary for workers in the industry; the consideration of the proposals for District Councils and Works Committees, put forward in the Whitley Report, having regard in each case to any such organizations as may already be in existence; and coöperation with the Joint Industrial Councils for other occupations to deal with problems of common interest. The Ministry of Labour is the Department responsible for assisting in the setting up of these Councils.

Interim Industrial Reconstruction Committees.—These Committees are set up in industries in which, for various reasons, progress towards the formation of Joint Standing Industrial Councils is not immediately practicable. They have been set up in the past by the Ministry of Reconstruction in conjunction with the Board of Trade and the

Ministry of Labour, but the responsibility for their formation now rests with the Ministry of Labour alone. Like the Joint Standing Industrial Councils, they consist of equal numbers of representatives of associations of employers and trade unions. What form they should take must depend on the circumstances of each industry. What functions they should assume and what they should leave or delegate to existing organizations or to specially created bodies, are also questions which must be determined by those concerned. But it is not intended that these Committees, any more than the permanent Joint Standing Industrial Councils, to which it is hoped they will lead, should confine themselves to the consideration of subjects specially referred to them by a Government Department. It is hoped that they will exercise a large initiative in devising means by which the transition from war to peace conditions may be most smoothly effected, and the way opened to the rapid restoration of industrial enterprise.

Trade Boards.—These Boards are composed of representatives of the employers and the work-people in the trade, together with several persons (usually three) appointed by the Minister of Labour. Their primary function is the fixing of legal minimum rates of wages, but they are also under a statutory obligation to consider questions on industrial matters referred to them by Government Departments, and are authorized by statute to make recommendations to Government Departments with regard to the industrial conditions in their trade. An Interim Industrial Reconstruction Committee would not ordinarily, therefore, be formed in an industry where a Trade Board was established or contemplated. If it were found necessary to set up a Trade Board in an industry where an Interim Industrial Reconstruction Committee already exists, the question of the relations between the Committee and the Board would then need to be considered with a view to arriving at an

agreement as to whether it was necessary for the Interim committee to continue in existence, and if so, with what functions.

I cite these organizations as an instance of the steady quiet unadvertised work which is going forward towards the rebuilding of the walls of society. Serious and valuable as are the functions described, they have an importance far beyond their actual results for they are a symbol and a symptom. They exemplify moderation and practicality. They display a measure of English good will between conflicting interests. They exalt unornamental business-like action over idealistic theories. They signify that we want to get on with the job without fuss and to some material purpose. In this side of the English character is one of the antidotes to revolution—and the approach to revolution.

"I love an easy man," said Lord Melbourne, Prime Minister nearly ninety years ago. The English are an easy people. Fretfulness, noise, over-politeness, pushfulness, anxiety, are alien to them. They distrust the mob-orator and the intellectual, but if a man has the domestic virtues they can forgive him nearly everything else. Over-righteousness appalls them, and they listen with coldness to high and noble theories from politicians. "Does it mean more wages," asks the working-man, lighting his pipe. "Interesting in its way," says a young lord in the Lobby of the Commons, "but what I want to know is whether Oxford is going to win the boat race." The secret of happiness is sometimes reached by unexpected short cuts.

CHAPTER XXII

NEW PROGRAMMES OF LIFE

WHILE political parties are being reshaped and reconstituted, politics themselves are being fused into new forms. It is true that the two temperaments—the precautionary, the "safety first" on the one hand, and the go-ahead, righteously-angry impatient-to-reform on the other—will continue to provide the two main arteries of endeavour. The names of the contending forces may change but much more important than that will be the change in the actual measures, the hard objectives for which each side will be battling.

The whole character of the day-by-day struggle on expedients which we call politics is to undergo transformation, is indeed undergoing it in thorough fashion in these months through which we are passing. The so-called philosophies named Liberalism and Conservatism, evolved in form from the time the middle classes came into power during the last century, imply beneficent action or inaction on behalf of all the population. The range of hardships, inequalities, and suffering which was considered inevitable or at least temporarily irremovable was of tremendous extent. The "Haves" on the "Have-Nots" as resulting from one of the

decrees of Providence—although it is necessary to say that an ever-widening circle of the "Haves" sought to ameliorate the condition and improve the chances of their less fortunate brethren. Still, when the best is said and thought of those whom chance, ability, legacies, or the act of God had given money and power, they were spheres apart from an understanding of the lives of their poor fellow-countrymen. During the last generation the balance has been adjusting itself somewhat, and war completed the operation, may indeed have overweighted the scales in the opposite direction. Culture, character, brain will always lift some above their fellows and entitle them to respect.

The fact forcing itself on attention at the moment is the revolution in the practical business of politics for which the war and its sequels are responsible. Conservatism, Liberalism, Labourism were swept into a common whirlpool by the danger to the country as a whole. Puny indeed seemed all the tenets in those days of stress. Labour was the first to recover. Labour rubbing its eyes found that it was at least of as much importance as Liberalism or Conservatism. Sections of it have begun violently to assert that it is of far more importance than either. However that may be, the fact is apparent that Labour properly organized can be extremely effective as an electoral force. Whether it has right or not it has might. The giant is awakening.

The Coalition Government, first under Mr. Asquith and then under Mr. Lloyd George, has included Liberals and Conservatives and Labour men, although

latterly the representatives of Labour have almost completely broken away, and independent liberals have formed themselves into an opposition band. There is hot criticism by each of the opposition sections (among whom I ought to list the Irishmen). There is scornful explanation by the Government. And through all, the underlying fact remains that there is no real cleavage of principle between the Government and the multiple opposition. Each and all are agreed on far-reaching reforms, including Home Rule for Ireland, a revolution in conditions for working people, the necessity for peaceful progress as opposed to aggressive militarism and big armies. There is, of course, a wide diversity as to methods, and many are to be found who urge that individual plans are traitorous or capitalistic or socialistic, and that they indicate a mistaken or a careless or even a wicked line of policy. Broadly speaking, however, there are no plainly marked dividing lines on principle, whatever heated partisans may say. The Conservatives outnumber the Liberals in the Government, but they have swallowed entire the Liberal programme and something beside. The Labour Movement outside the Government practically commands the situation. There is now no Conservative party as it used to be regarded, and only a remnant of the Liberals, and whether Mr. Lloyd George goes over to one section or reverts to the other or takes command of Labour really does not matter. What does matter is the future policy, the action to be undertaken in refashioning the life of the country.

ENGLAND AFTER THE WAR

England is feeling her way to a new programme. There is doubt as to what classes of individuals will presently be working the machine. The very name by which these individuals will call themselves is in darkness. It may be that Labour will unite with Liberalism for the task in view. Possibly Mr. Lloyd George, with a collection of brilliant minds hitherto labelling themselves Conservative, will be called to the undertaking. It is even on the cards that an audacious man of high character like Lord Robert Cecil may step into the breach with a programme and a following to embody the impulses and determinations of the English people in their new life. It is an interesting riddle, but nothing more than a riddle and one soon to be solved so far as personalities are concerned. There can be hardly any doubt at all as to the general nature of the new programme. The mood of the people is settling that beyond alteration or dispute. The variations in form, the length of time required for full development, are matters for legitimate conjecture. What we can be really certain about is that we are on the frontiers of the new era.

It is necessary to rise above party considerations to observe the probable directions of the new life in England. It is not unlikely that one commanding political group will map out the course, and then as time goes on separate parties will take direction of affairs, each alternating government exercising a moderating influence on its predecessors and its successors. There is a long road to be traversed, and while some of the

first parts of it will be covered quickly the end may not be reached for a generation.

It may be said with decision that the aims of Labour are going to touch the government of England in all its branches in the near future, and in face of this fact, in face of the fact that a Labour government may itself be in power, it is soothing to know that there will be constantly at work a mellowing influence preserving usages, habits of thought and behaviour which have helped to make England so comfortable a place to live in for those members of the Anglo-Saxon race who are not suffering in any marked degree from a lack of this world's goods. There will be no soviet government in England. At the same time there will be fewer very rich people. It will be a harder country for the lazy or the stupidly snobbish—although the snobbish possessing high ability will go ahead as they do in all countries. I look to see the power of the House of Commons increase and not diminish. I am pretty sure (though here one speaks with speculative diffidence) that the monarchy as a practical institution well adapted for its special purposes will be continued. In the general unsettlement at present the claims of Labour, of this branch or that branch or of the whole movement, constitute a standing inconvenience, perhaps it would be more correct to say a standing danger. I use neither of the nouns in any deprecatory sense. Labour leaders themselves would be the first to endorse them. They would say that inconvenience and danger are part of the nature of the case when working people

apply pressure to get something nearer to a proper remuneration. It is a melancholy duty to inflict inconvenience and, if necessary, danger. The pressure is brought to bear not merely on capitalist employers, but on a district, or some special part of the population or on the country in the bulk, as during the railway strike. The strike may very likely cause more suffering to work-people than the outside public and to persons in other grades, if only for the reason that the working people are the great majority of the nation.

The miners are threatening to strike because they want nationalization of the mines, and a miners' strike with the ensuing shortage of fuel, stoppage of railway communications and hindrance to the various industries dependent on coal would injure not only the coal-owners but everybody else and injure other sections of labour most of all. The iron workers, let us say, strike for more money although their present wages would be entirely satisfactory perhaps to the carpenters, but the carpenters are penalized because the iron workers are not satisfied. Each union acts on its own, though there are tendencies towards general action on some bigger questions. There is, it should be stated, no resentment, among unions not involved, at the loss caused by the strike of other organizations. It is all in the game, and the community has to be taught a lesson —even if of that community they form a part. In a word, there is no real standardization apart from the standards of each organization. Even if there were general standards it would not be worth very much

while there is no scientific table as to the cost of living and the value of money. Four pounds a week with bread at sixpence a loaf may be acceptable, but with bread at a shilling a loaf four pounds would mean poverty. It is beside the point to ask if the Trade Unions cannot see reason. They would ask at once why the people who are taking big profits cannot see reason, the textile manufacturers, ship owners, and all the rest who are worth tens of thousands of pounds, hundreds of thousands of pounds more than they were before the war. Let the assassins begin! A cynic might observe that the men's demands are damnable but that the worst of it is, the men are right. A further complication is introduced by the fact that while some occupations might from their profits pay almost luxurious wages to their employees, other occupations cannot make a fair return on capital, perhaps no return at all by paying a minimum demand of the Trade Union from which their work-people are drawn. One further fact illustrates the many perplexities of the situation. Some individuals and some firms who are making vast profits employ practically no work-people at all. Financiers, trading houses, brokers, may be making fortunes out of the community, making them legitimately and honestly and yet be subject to none of the worries and responsibilities and risks inseparable at present from undertakings which have of necessity long and large wages lists.

The various considerations raised by these and a multiplicity of facts cannot stop, cannot even check

for a day the repeated demands of workers of all industries large and small for more money and less hours. More money and less hours are constantly being given, a fact which plays its part in the steadily rising prices for all commodities. It is taken for granted among all thinking people that these demands will not cease but will grow. Labour has found its strength. It will not in future be denied, and unless it unexpectedly goes mad and tries to put sudden and wholesale blackmail on the nation it must get practically all it wants. But how can the country pay its way under these circumstances? it may be asked. There is a pretty hard question to answer but I think a method will be found to answer it. The first essential, rapidly being recognized all round, is that Labour must take its share of the responsibility in providing for the welfare of all the people. It must have a strong representation not only in Parliament but in what is known as Capital. Labour cannot secure lucrative revenge for class government of the past by instituting now class action on the other side. That way lie chaos and suicide. Nor can Labour fail to recognize that human nature is still far away from the stars, and that ability, natural or acquired, strength of will, clearness of vision, wide and varied education, some of these things, or all of them allied, will lead to position or power or wealth in varying degrees rising far above the rates of pay received by those who by aptitude or capacity have to be content with the lesser tasks of life. They know these things already, the leaders, but hot-heads among the rank

and file are not without their influence. The millennium is not yet. Whatever changes are brought about, and they may be many, they will not include complete equality of opportunity, for environment, despite all legislation, from now to Doomsday will in most instances remain the tyrant or the benefactor. Even an ideal government could not entirely control environment.

I daresay there are a good many money-making employers who do not much care what happens to their servants so long as business proceeds and so long as those engaged in it get enough, whether it be starvation pay or not, to force them on with their daily toil. But there is undoubtedly a drastic thinning out of these men. It has become widely recognized that profits are to be secured by factors of which Labour is by far the larger—outside the employers' own personal qualities. Many employers have come to know that in some form or other Labour must be made a partner, not a nominal partner in the patronizing way which means £5 or £10 at Christmas should the proprietor have made a million during the year, but a real partnership on which above a certain minimum a man's earnings expand with the prosperity of the business. Busy minds are working on schemes and some of them will come to fruition before long.

There is in fact a change of mind towards Labour, some of it due to war gratitude, some to war enlightenment, some to self-interest, some to fear. (The spirit of heavenly grace has not suddenly descended on all

the aristocrats and capitalists any more than it has on the Labour party.) But the fact remains that there is a different attitude between employers and employed, and it is bound to have effect on the practical outcome of affairs.

We are at a period in politics very different from anything experienced in the past. Piecemeal legislation will not now satisfy anybody. There is afoot something more compelling than local government bills, housing bills, House of Lords Reform bills or other measures which were gravely and sincerely urged and gravely and sincerely opposed and either passed or rejected to the not very serious let or hindrance of the people at large. The disintegration and reassembling of parties which is now in process will bring to light personal forces, and these personal forces will have to face hard and big realities. All the events in the country are tending towards a general policy. That policy must take into account that England has got to make wealth before she can distribute a very considerable portion to the workers. It also has to take account of our relations with the outside world, political and commercial—because they have a steady and direct bearing on the prosperity and contentment of our people at home. Here, then, is an outline of what I regard as the inevitable English policy of the future:

The complete transformation of the English industrial world in so far as the reciprocal relations between workmen, employers, the Unions, and Parliament are concerned.

Arrangements by which all workers except the provably

idle and criminal shall be assured of a sufficiency of money, a sufficiency of leisure, and a sufficiency of healthy shelter.

Provisions which shall secure the largely increased production necessary not only for the revenue of the country but for the capitalists' profit and the increased money and the better conditions for the workers.

These three proposals are interlocked, and examination will show how they fit together. In the first place there must be the shedding of some old prejudices and habits of thought which have grown up round a necessity for certain courses of action in the past. To some it will sound like heresy that privileges and rights of Trade Unions should be abrogated, but disappointment vanishes when it is seen that the new fabric of Labour is to be strengthened thereby. The reshaping of Parliament will cause a thrill of horror until it is seen that only by careful rebuilding can an ancient edifice be preserved in all its essential value and attractions. Without bold steps forward, Trade Unions in all their demands for higher wages may easily take us to the brink of bankruptcy, perhaps over the brink. Without some remodelling of the constitution and powers of Parliament, the continuance of Parliament as we know it may well be in danger from the revolutionary challenge of "direct action" by one or more of the great Unions.

In all the turmoil and bewilderment about wages and profits and conditions of Labour, of the rights of Labour and of the rights of Capital, there is a primary difficulty in knowing what is the minimum standard of a decent

life for any class of worker. Four pounds for the casual labourer may well be six pounds for the carpenter, or the clerk, seven pounds for the miner and ten pounds for the skilled engineer. We are not yet a socialist people, whatever earnest young men may write in the weekly or monthly reviews. Councils of perfection indeed are those which suggest that all individuals and all families should attain the same measure of comfort, the same measure of cultured satisfaction. We cannot get away from gradings of desire as well as ability, gradings of temperament too—all to some extent produced by environment on the one hand or natural gifts or the natural lack of them on the other. The minimum standard for food, shelter, clothes, and health is all that can be established for common use. That minimum standard for town and country, for large cities and small cities, can be obtained and will have to be obtained as a basic line. Above this will have to be fixed a minimum remuneration for groups of occupation. It will be a tiresome but by no means an impossible task to draw up these schedules—which might perhaps be revised every six months in order to adjust them with the current value of money. Below the scale thus fixed remuneration must never fall. It will be asked right away, what of those industries which cannot pay their way in these conditions? There must be only one method of dealing with them, namely, to decide whether on the whole they are necessary for the comfort, convenience, health or business of the nation, and if they are, to hand them over to State control or

under supervision to subsidize them. We cannot have it all ways, and if we start out with the idea that the interest of money makers must not be placed before the welfare of the common people I daresay we shall find some luxury trades disappearing from sight. Not many will be the worse for it, and a good many will be better off.

It is not to be supposed that this wholesale readjustment of trade conditions will be affected without alarm, and strong division of opinion, and here is where the reform of Parliament comes in. The House of Commons must be the grand Trade Union of the nation. The voting strength of Labour in the country makes it practically certain that from the next General Election at least one third of the members of the House of Commons will represent Labour, and it may very likely be that Labour will hold half the membership or even more. Means must be devised for the swift and direct appeal to the Commons as a whole whenever a crisis seems to be coming. The decision cannot, as in the past, be left entirely to the Cabinet which meets in secret and decides in secret. The danger, if danger there be, will tend to evaporate when matters are adjudicated by the House of Commons in open session. The country is vitally concerned and the country has a right to know at once and in full all the rights and wrongs of the conclusions which are reached. True, the Cabinet may seek to advise and lead the House, but if its counsel and guidance is not accepted then the Government must face the penalty and make way

for others. In practice, I daresay any Government would do as the present Coalition Government has so often done and will leave the decision to the House of Commons as a body without seeking to exercise any influence one way or the other.

Closely linked up with this procedure of swift and automatic appeal to the House of Commons are the methods which will have to be adopted to secure greater production. There must be a wide relaxation of Trade Union rules to permit of many innovations. While the minimum pay of each worker will be for the regulation number of hours there must be elasticity with regard to the increase of hours and labour if and when mutually satisfactory arrangements can be made between workers and employers. This additional time may be recompensed by piecework rates, a form of coöperation which will not override but may go side by side with a share of the firm's profits at the end of the year. The one transcendent necessity for the resuscitation of the country is the production of more goods. Hard times indeed are ahead if we do not add to our production, and by adding to it sufficiently we shall have the means for the new and better England which is so insistently demanded.

It may be that in some of the less healthful occupations an increase of hours would be inadvisable and possibly it would be for the general good that there is no extension in some, perhaps all, the occupations in which women and young people are engaged. But when these and other necessary exceptions are made the great

mass of industrial operations is open for change. The fundamental thing in any scheme of reform is that the worker should be protected with regard to his or her standard of wages before any extension of possible working time is planned, and when the extension comes the work should be paid for at a high and tempting rate. I know it is urged that numbers of workers in the mining industry, for example, are content to earn so much a week and want to earn it in the shortest possible time, and, having no regard for production, just leave off work when they have earned enough for their necessity or indulgencies up to the next Monday morning. Well, you meet idle slackers in all departments of life, but I do not believe the lazy, careless, spendthrift temperament indicated in this argument predominates among English workers. I believe it is a libel on them. The rates of pay will not be so extremely high as to make it inadvisable for the practical, steady worker to secure as much as he can for the benefit of his family and himself as a future standby. Moreover, the Trade Union organizations must get into this matter with energy if they are to do their patriotic duty. For the sake of the general production they must make it a point of principle for their members that where they can without injury to themselves do extra work they should undertake it with zealousness and tenacity. The general scheme of which this is a part for the benefit of all, but particularly for the benefit of the worker, and they must show a spirit of determination in putting it through. The old country has got to be built up

again somehow and here is one of the methods of doing it.

I have mentioned but one direction in which Trade Union rules may be relaxed but there are of course many others. Women must be allowed in departments from which they have been debarred. During the war it was shown that a few weeks' training enabled both men and women to do some of the simpler operations which had always been regarded as the exclusive possession of skilled workers, who had shut out intruders relentlessly. The emergency of the nation is only less grave than that produced by the war itself. It is necessary to get all the work done that we can. Labour has reached a stage in which it must look beyond its own nose. The narrow extremists who call themselves advanced and independent but are in reality fanatical conservatives will certainly raise a long and prolonged howl if these proposals or kindred ones are put before them, but most of the Labour leaders, like most of the rank and file, are practical men of common sense who can see a little way into the future, who are shrewd enough on their own behalf, are not unmindful that their own welfare is bound up with that of all kinds of other people—more so now than ever before.

But the alteration in Trade Union rules by the workers, the share of profits by the employers, will not in themselves be enough to bring into being the new and prosperous era. Many kinds of fresh developments must be set to work. There must be, for example, a

wide and general application of labour-saving machinery in order to stimulate output.

There are any amount of inventions used by America, the adoption of which will be not only of great service in the factory but in many other enterprises. For instance, in farming a score of operations could be amplified and expedited by the use of machines, large or small. The British farmer has been doing pretty well lately. He has to do better in the future not for his own sake alone.

One objection to the sweep of reform which I believe to be inevitable will be that with new machines, overtime, the lessening of Trade Union rules generally, there will be more unemployment. The answer is that the vital part of the new programme must be comprehensive, far-reaching schemes to be immediately entered upon for the development (and if necessary the inauguration) of industries essential to the nation. In the war we learnt to manufacture articles needed not only for ourselves but all parts of the world, and these included commodities, the making of which was regained from our enemies—dyes, for example. Government encouragement may be necessary. There will not be any unemployment that matters if advantage is taken of all the openings that present themselves from now onwards.

One of the most important of all the developments must be that in the direction of producing more food. We are an agricultural people, and we have hundreds of thousands of acres which are lost so far as food is

concerned and which would give us wheat, potatoes, and fruit as well as other things. Meanwhile we are importing 50 per cent. of our foodstuffs from abroad. I know the economic difficulties in the way, but under the new dispensation the country will not be able to ignore this opportunity at our doors. If we get a move on our manufactures it should help our farming industry tremendously. The country must be one complete machine and all the parts must work together. Imagination and courage as well as executive capacity will be needed to frame a policy which will include a vastly increased food production on our available land. But the wit of men is not yet exhausted. We have to meet the facts as they are and we shall be urged forward by the sharpest of goads, that of sheer necessity.

It will be observed that to dovetail together these various expedients which I have outlined requires no exclusive devotion to Conservatism, Liberalism or Labourism. None will dominate the life of England. Those who regard a political nickname as the Open Sesame now and in the immediate future will experience rude jars and shocks. There is no definite law in these matters. English adaptability is what is required and what will be forthcoming regardless of fixed "principles" however loud the lamentations of the political prophets or however copious their tears.

Plans of action regarding labour are to the fore in England's new policy but the country has responsibilities and commitments other than those at her own door. In consonance with what she does at home must be her

actions across the seas. Trouble quite near at hand must be settled. A contented England and an Ireland carrying arms in revolt is an impossible picture. Ireland must be given Home Rule however Ireland squabbles over it. The Home Rule that is given must be as nearly as English judgment can decide the kind of Home Rule that Ireland most desires. A particular form of self-government should go to the extreme of what a united Ireland wants short of a separate flag and a separate republic. If it be found that Dominion Home Rule will be satisfactory Dominion Home Rule must be given and a little more to show our good will. If the Dominion form of Government is going to lead North and South to cut each other's throats then there must be thrust upon Ireland such a system as will at least partially unite all sections at present and will allow of the development of a unified complete Irish legislature as soon as some sort of agreement can be hammered out between the warring sections. It seems a pig-headed thing to assert that for her own sake and for the sake of England, Ireland has got to have Home Rule swiftly whether she likes it or not, but that is about the kind of position we have reached.

So far as foreign policy is concerned England must steadily work along the lines of endeavour indicated by the ideals of the League of Nations. She has taken the lead in the past and it looks as if she will keep it. Here lies sanity, progress, and good will. With a small and well trained army, a navy unsurpassed in the quality of its personnel, in its scientific equipment, but not over-

whelming in size, an air organization capable of an extension in time of need and abreast of every development of invention, in this combination is a treble force, strong within its limits but small in comparison with the armaments possessed by other nations. We can perhaps with some hesitations, here and there with some forebodings, show an example of sincerity to all the world. Work along these lines has already begun. That we shall save money is but an incidental. Should the dreadful necessity ever arise, England will again raise her millions and her thousands of millions rather than submit to national humiliation or see her flag debased but she is strong enough or proud enough in the meantime to speak aloud for humanity.

THE END

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